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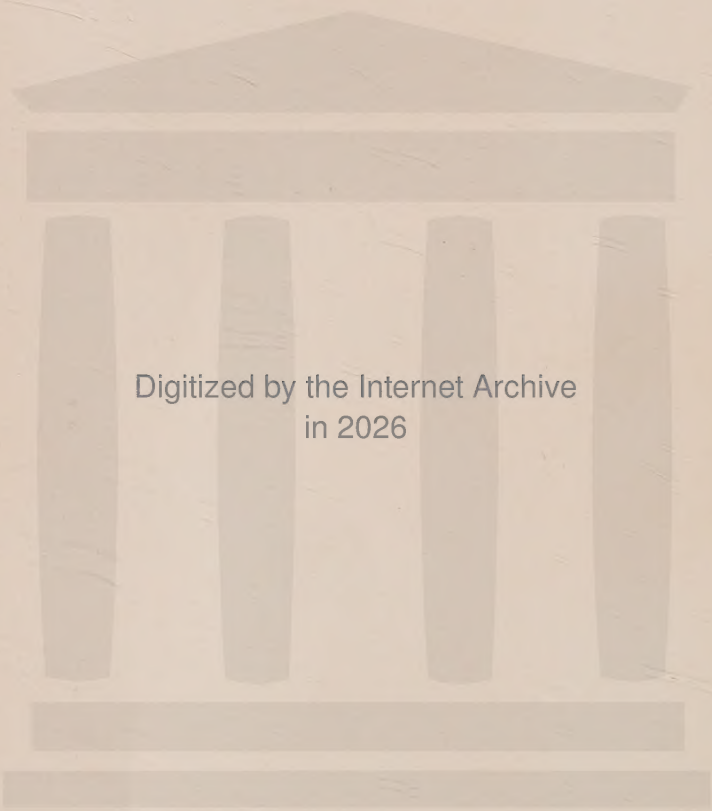

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" *Allen Gewalten*
Zum Trutz sich erhalten,
Nimmer sich beugen . . ."

—GOETHE.

" *Philosophiren ist dephlegmatisiren, ist vivificiren.*"

—NOVALIS.

LIST OF PORTRAITS

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THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL IN GERMANY

INTRODUCTION

THE task of giving a connected account of the German Romantic School is, for a Dane, an arduous and disheartening one. In the first place, the subject is overwhelmingly vast; in the second, it has been treated again and again by German writers; and, lastly, these writers, in their division of labour, have entered so learnedly into every detail, that it is impossible for a foreigner, one, moreover, to whom the sources are not always accessible, to compete with them in exhaustive knowledge. From their childhood they have been familiar with a literature with which he first makes acquaintance at an age when assimilation, in any quantity, has become a much more difficult process. What the foreigner must rely on is, partly the decision with which he takes up and maintains his personal standpoint, partly the possibility that he may display qualities which are not characteristic of the native author. Such a quality in the case in point is the artistic faculty, the faculty, I mean, of representation, of externalisation. The German nature is so intense and profound that this faculty is comparatively rare. The foreigner has, moreover, this advantage over the native, that it is easier for him to detect the mark of race—that in the German author which stamps him as a German. The German critic is too apt to consider "German" synonymous with "human being," for the reason that the human beings he deals with are almost always Germans. The foreigner is struck by characteristics which

are overlooked by the native, sometimes because he is so accustomed to them, more frequently because he himself possesses them.

There are many works to be criticised and classified, many personalities to describe. My aim will be to present these personalities and works in as firm and sharp outline as possible, and, without giving undue attention to detail, to throw light upon the whole in such a manner that its principal features will stand out and arrest the eye. I shall endeavour, on the one hand, to treat the history of literature as humanly as possible, to go as deep down as I can, to seize upon the remotest, innermost psychological movements which prepared for and produced the various literary phenomena ; and on the other hand, I shall try to present the result in as plastic and tangible a form as possible. If I can succeed in giving shape, clear and accurate, to the hidden feeling, the idea, which everywhere underlies the literary phenomenon, my task will be accomplished. By preference, I shall always, when possible, embody the abstract in the personal.

First and foremost, therefore, I everywhere trace the connection between literature and life. This is at once proved by the fact that, whereas earlier Danish literary controversies (that between Heiberg and Hauch, for example, or even the famous one between Baggesen and Oehlenschläger) were kept entirely within the domain of literature and dealt exclusively with literary principles, the controversy aroused by the first volume of this work has entailed, quite as much from the nature of the work as from the irrationality of its opponents, the discussion of a multitude of moral, social, and religious questions. The Danish reaction, feeling itself to be akin to the one I am about to depict and unmask, has attempted to suppress the movement which it recognised to be antagonistic to itself—but so far with little prospect of success. A French proverb says : *Nul prince n'a tué son successeur.*

When, however, the connection between literature and life is thus emphasised, the delineations and interpretations of men and their books by no means produce what we may call draw-

ing-room history of literature. I go down to the foundations of real life, and show how the emotions which find their expression in literature arise in the human heart. And this same human heart is no still pool, no idyllic mountain lake. It is an ocean, with submarine vegetation and terrible inhabitants. Drawing-room history of literature, like drawing-room poetry, sees in human life a drawing-room, a decorated ball-room—the furniture and the people alike polished, the brilliant illumination excluding all possibility of dark corners. Let those who choose to do so look at things thus ; it is not my point of view. Just as the botanist must handle nettles as well as roses, so the student of literature must accustom himself to look, with the unflinching gaze of the naturalist or the physician, upon all the forms taken by human nature, in their diversity and their inward affinity. It makes the plant neither more nor less interesting that it smells sweet or stings ; but the dispassionate interest of the botanist is often accompanied by the purely human pleasure in the beauty of the flower.

As I follow the more important literary movements from country to country, studying their psychology, I attempt to condense the fluid material by showing how, from time to time, it crystallises into one or other definite and intelligible type. The attempt is attended with extraordinary difficulty in this particular period of German literature, from the fact that the chief characteristic of the period is an absence of distinctly typical forms. This literature is not plastic ; it is musical. French Romanticism produces clearly defined figures ; the ideal of German Romanticism is not a figure, but a melody, not definite form, but infinite aspiration. Is it obliged to name the object of its longing ? It designates it by such terms as "ein geheimes Wort," "eine blaue Blume," "der Zauber der Waldeinsamkeit" (a mystic word — a blue flower — the magic of the lonely woods). These expressions are, however, definitions of moods, and each mood has a corresponding psychological condition , my task is to trace back each mood, emotion, or longing to the group of psychological conditions to which it belongs. This group in combination constitutes a soul ; and such

a soul, with strongly marked individuality, represents in literature the many who were unable to depict their own character, but who recognised it when thus placed before them. I may possibly succeed in proving that the type does not escape us because the author may have chosen to paint landscape after landscape in place of delineating characteristic personalities, or because he confounds literature with music to the extent of at last entitling his poems simply *Allegro* or *Rondo;* but that, on the contrary, the distinctly peculiar qualities of these landscapes and the character of this word-music are symptomatic of a psychological condition which may be determined with considerable accuracy.

In the general introduction to this work I have sketched the plan which I have proposed to myself. It is my intention to describe the first great literary movement of the century, the germinating and growing reaction, first elucidating its nature, then following it to its climax. Afterwards I shall show how this reaction was met by a breeze of liberalism blowing from the eighteenth century, which swells into a gale and sweeps away all opposition. Not that the liberal views of the nineteenth century are ever identical with those of the eighteenth, or that its literary forms or scientific ideas ever bear the eighteenth century stamp. Neither Voltaire, nor Rousseau, nor Diderot, neither Lessing nor Schiller, neither Hume nor Godwin, rise from the dead; but they are one and all avenged upon their enemies.

Regarded as a whole, German Romanticism is reaction. Nevertheless, as an intellectual, poetico-philosophical reaction, it contains many germs of new development, unmistakable productions of that spirit of progress which, by remoulding the old, creates the new, and by altering boundaries gains territory.

The older Romanticists begin, without exception, as the apostles of "enlightenment." They introduce a new tone into German poetry, give their works a new colour, and, in addition to this, revive both the spirit and the substance of the old fairy-tale, Volkslied, and legend. They exercise at first a fertilising influence upon German science; research

in the domains of history, ethnography, and jurisprudence, the study of German antiquity, Indian and Greek-Latin philology, and the systems and dreams of the *Naturphilosophie* all receive their first impulse from Romanticism. They widened the emotional range of German poetry, though the emotions to which they gave expression were more frequently morbid than healthy. As critics, they originally, and with success, aimed at enlarging the spiritual horizon. In their social capacity they vowed undying hatred to all dead conventionality in the relations between the sexes. The best among them in their youth laboured ardently for the intensification of that spiritual life which is based upon a belief in the supernatural. In politics, when not indifferent, they generally began as very theoretical republicans; who, however, in spite of their cosmopolitanism, strove to elevate and strengthen German patriotism.

Unfortunately, their pursuit of all these worthy aims ended in comparative failure. Of all that the German Romanticists produced, little will endure—some masterly translations by A. W. Schlegel, a few of Tieck's productions, a handful of Hardenberg's and another of Eichendorff's lyrics, some of Friedrich Schlegel's essays, a few of Arnim's and Brentano's smaller works, a select number of Hoffmann's tales, and some very remarkable dramas and tales from the pen of that eccentric but real genius, Heinrich von Kleist. The rest of the life-work of the Romanticists has disappeared from the memory of the present generation. Looking back on it from this distance, most of their endeavour seems to have ended in smoke. In the matter of language, with their intangible imagery, their misuse of words in expressing the strange, weird, and mysterious, their archaisms, and their determination to be unintelligible to the ordinary reader, they rather diminished than enriched the poetic vocabulary, rather corrupted than improved literary style. In the domain of poetry, Romanticism ended in hysterical piety and vapouring. In the social domain it occupied itself with only one question, that of the relations between the sexes; and its ideas on this subject were, for the most part, so

abnormal and morbidly unhealthy, that most of its passionate blows were dealt in the air. In dealing them, it was not humanity at large that the Romanticists had in view, but a few favoured, aristocratic, artistic natures. In religious matters, these men, whose moral and poetical theories were at first so revolutionary, bowed their necks to the yoke the moment they saw it. And in politics it was they who directed the proceedings of the Congress of Vienna and prepared its manifestoes, abolishing liberty of thought in the interval between a religious festival in St. Stephen's and an oyster supper with Fanny Elsler.

I shall touch but seldom and briefly upon Danish literature, only now and again piercing in the canvas of the panorama I am unrolling a hole through which the situation in Denmark may be seen. Not that I forget or lose sight of Danish literature. On the contrary, it is ever present with me. Whilst trying to present to my readers the inner history of a foreign literature, I am all the time making indirect contributions to the history of our own. I am painting the background which is required to throw its characteristics into relief. I am working at the foundation upon which, according to my conviction, the history of modern Danish literature rests. My method may be indirect, but it is the more thorough for that. I should like, however, in a few words, to indicate the general conclusion to which a comparison between Danish and foreign literature at this period has led me.

The relative positions of Germany and Denmark may be defined as follows: German literature is at this period comparatively original in its aims and its productions; Danish literature either continues the working out of a peculiarly Scandinavian vein, or builds upon German foundations. The Danish authors have, as a rule, read and assimilated the German; the German authors have neither read nor been in any way influenced by the Danes. Steffens, through whom we receive the impetus from Germany, is the devoted disciple of Schelling. Witness the following passage from one of his letters to that philosopher: "I am your pupil, absolutely and entirely your pupil. All that I produce was

originally yours. This is no passing feeling; it is my firm conviction that such is the case, and I do not think the less of myself for it. Therefore, when once I have produced a really great work which I should gladly call mine, I shall, as soon as it has been recognised, publicly, enthusiastically, proclaim you to be my teacher, and hand over to you my laurel wreath."[1]

In German literature there is more life, in the corresponding Danish literature more art. It is Germany which produces, which unearths, the material. That literature of which Romanticism is the first development, lives and moves and revels in intense emotions, struggles with problems, creates forms which it dashes to pieces again. Danish literature takes German material and ideas, instinct with life, and often succeeds in moulding them more artistically, giving them clearer expression than their German producers do. (Note, for example, the case of Tieck and Heiberg.) The Danes apply and remodel, or they embody kindred ideas in more favourable and more plastic material, such, or instance, as that provided by the Scandinavian mythology and legends.

The result, as I have elsewhere shown, is that Romanticism acquired more lucidity and clearer contours on Danish soil. It became less a thing of the night; it ventured, veiled, into the light of the sun. It felt that it had come to a sedate, sober-minded people, a people who were not yet quite sure that moonlight was not unnatural and sentimental. It came up from the deep mine shafts from which Novalis had been the first to conjure it, and, with Oehlenschläger's Vaulundur, hammered on the mountain-side till the mountain burst open and laid all its treasures bare to the light of day. It felt that it had come to another, a more serene and idyllic clime; it shook off all its weirdness; its thick, shapeless mists condensed into slender river nymphs; it forgot the Harz and the Blocksberg, and took up its abode one beautiful Midsummer Eve in the Deer Park near Copenhagen.[2]

Aladdin is a finer and more intelligible literary work than

[1] G. L. Plitt: *Aus Schelling's Leben*, i. 309.
[2] G. Brandes: *Samlede Skrifter*, i. 464.

Tieck's *Kaiser Oktavianus*, but Oehlenschläger could not deny that *Aladdin* would never have been written if *Oktavianus* had not been in existence. Heiberg's *Julespög og Nytaarslöjer* is to the full as witty as Tieck's Aristophanic satires, but the whole idea—the play within the play, the literary satire, and the blending of the sentimental with the ironical—is borrowed from Tieck, and, what is worse, is only comprehensible from Tieck's standpoint. In short, there is in Oehlenschläger, Hauch, and Heiberg more form than in Novalis, Tieck, and Fr. Schlegel, but less substance—that is to say, less direct connection with real life. German literature has too often formed the connecting link. We Danes have too often refused to occupy ourselves, in literature, with the great problems of life, have simply dismissed them when we could not succeed in giving them correct literary form.

Looked at from the psychological point of view, the position may be described as follows. The Danish Romantic authors have, generally speaking, been the superiors of the Germans as regards art, their inferiors as regards intellect. As a rule, every production of the German author, however small, though it be formless, weak, nay, actually a failure, yet expresses a whole philosophy of life, and that no fanciful philosophy, but one evolved and matured by personal experience, and stamped with the whole astonishingly many-sided culture which distinguishes the educated German. A poem by Novalis, a tale by Tieck or Hoffmann, or a play by Kleist, contains a poetico-philosophical theory of life; and it is the theory not only of a poet, but of a man. A tragedy by Oehlenschläger again, or a fairy tale by Andersen, or a vaudeville by Hostrup, will almost invariably be distinguished by such distinctly poetical qualities as fancy, feeling, whimsicality, gaiety, youthful freshness and aplomb, but the philosophy is too often as primitive as a child's. Heiberg is almost the only writer in whose works there is any sign of a philosophy based upon science, and acquiring ever more profundity from the experiences of life. Of real development there are often only faint traces. The youthful works of such authors as Oehlenschläger, Winther, and Andersen are as perfect as those of their maturity. Some-

times, as in the case of Oehlenschläger, advancing years produce in the talent a suspicion of corpulence, of unctuousness. Sometimes, as in the case of Paludan-Müller, the ideal grows more and more attenuated. When a change does take place, it rarely signifies that the author has gradually evolved for himself a new philosophy of life; no—after treading the narrow path of poetry for a time, he strikes into one of the two great highroads, either the road of middle-class respectability or the road of orthodox piety. The dressing-gown or the cassock—one or other of these garments almost inevitably supersedes the Spanish cloak of poetic youth.

It may, then, generally speaking, be asserted that, in those cases where it is possible to compare the German Romanticists with the Danish, the former have the more original philosophy of life, and are greater as personalities, whatever they may be as poets.

Let us look at the subject from a third point of view. To the Danish authors, as a body, may be attributed the merit of avoiding the fantastic, tasteless extravagances of which the Germans are frequently guilty. The Danes stop in time; they avoid paradox or do not carry it to its logical conclusion; they have the steadiness due to naturally well-balanced minds and naturally phlegmatic dispositions; they are hardly ever indecent, audacious, blasphemous, revolutionary, wildly fantastic, utterly sentimental, utterly unreal, or utterly sensual; they seldom run amuck, they never tilt at the clouds, and they never fall into a well. This is what makes them so popular with their own countrymen. Unerring taste and elegance, such as distinguish Heiberg's poetry and Gade's music, vigorous, healthy originality, such as characterises Oehlenschläger's and Hartmann's best works, will always be prized by Danes as the expression of noble and self-controlled art. What a contrast is presented by the overstrained, extravagant personalities peopling the Romantic hospital of Germany! A phthisical Moravian Brother with the consumptive's sensuality and the consumptive's mystic yearnings—Novalis. A satirical hypochondriac, subject to hallucinations and with

morbid leanings to Catholicism—Tieck. A genius, impotent to produce, but with the propensity of genius to revolt and the imperative craving of impotence to subject itself to outward authority—Friedrich Schlegel. A dissipated fantast with the half-insane imagination of the drunkard—Hoffmann. A foolish mystic like Werner, and a genius like the suicide Kleist. Think of Hoffmann, and his pupil, Hans Andersen, and observe how sane, but also how sober and subdued, Andersen appears compared with his first master.

It is, then, certain that there is more of the quality of harmony among the Danes. And it is easy to understand that those who regard harmony, even when meagre, as the highest quality of art, will inevitably rank the Danish literature of the first decades of this century above the German. It has, however, to a great extent attained to this harmony by means of caution, by lack of artistic courage. The Danish poets never fell, because they never mounted to a height from which there was any danger of falling. They left it to others to ascend Mont Blanc. They escaped breaking their necks, but they never gathered the Alpine flowers which only bloom on the giddy heights or on the brink of precipices. The quality in literature which, it seems to me, we Danes have never sufficiently prized, is boldness, that quality in the author which incites him, regardless of consequences, to give expression to his artistic ideal. The daring development of what is typical in his literary tendency, often constitutes the beauty of his work; or, to put it more plainly, when a literary tendency like Romanticism develops in the direction of pure fancy, that author seems to me the most interesting, who rises to the most daring heights of fantastic extravagance—as, for instance, Hoffmann. The more madly fantastic he is, the finer he is, just as the poplar is finer the taller it is, and the beech finer the more stately and wide-spreading it is. The fineness lies in the daring and vigour with which that which is typical is expressed. He who discovers a new country may, in the course of his explorations, be stranded on a reef. It is an easy matter to avoid the reef and leave the country undiscovered. The Danish

Romanticists are never insane like Hoffmann, but neither are they ever dæmonic like him. They lose in thrilling, overpowering life and energy what they gain in lucidity and readableness. They appeal to a greater number and a more varied class of readers, but they do not enthral them. The more vigorous originality alarms the many, but fascinates the few. In Danish Romanticism there is none of Friedrich Schlegel's audacious immorality, but neither is there anything like that spirit of opposition which in him amounts to genius ; his ardour melts, and his daring moulds into new and strange shapes, much that we accept as unalterable. Nor do the Danes become Catholic mystics. Protestant orthodoxy in its most petrified form flourishes with us : so do supernaturalism and pietism ; and in Grundtvigianism we slide down the inclined plane which leads to Catholicism ; but in this matter, as in every other, we never take the final step ; we shrink back from the last consequences. The result is that the Danish reaction is far more insidious and covert than the German. Veiling itself as vice does, it clings to the altars of the Church, which have always been a sanctuary for criminals of every species. It is never possible to lay hold of it, to convince it then and there that its principles logically lead to intolerance, inquisition, and despotism. Kierkegaard, for example, is in religion orthodox, in politics a believer in absolutism, towards the close of his career a fanatic. Yet—and this is a genuinely Romantic trait—he all his life long avoids drawing any practical conclusions from his doctrines ; one only catches an occasional glimpse of such a feeling as admiration for the Inquisition, or hatred of natural science.

Let us take, by way of contrast, another supporter of orthodoxy and absolutism, Joseph de Maistre, as high-minded and sincere a believer as Kierkegaard, and equally philanthropic. De Maistre pursues all his theories to their clear conclusions, shirking nothing which must be regarded as a direct consequence of his beliefs. Like Kierkegaard, he is a man of brilliant parts and solid culture, but whereas Kierkegaard, when it comes to practical applications, is as afraid of "public scandal" as any old maid, De Maistre

boldly accepts all necessary consequences. The famous passage in praise of the executioner in the sixth conversation of the *Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg*, leaves nothing to be desired in the matter of plain speaking. The executioner is a "sublime being," "the corner-stone of society;" along with him "all social order disappears." According to De Maistre's theory, two powers are required to quell the rebellious spirits—the spirit of unbelief and the spirit of disobedience—let loose by the French Revolution, and these two are the Pope and the executioner. The Pope and the executioner are the two main props of society; the one crushes the revolutionary thought with his bull, the other cuts off the revolutionary head with his axe. It is a pleasure to read such argument. Here we have vigour and determination, effectual expression of a clear thought, energetic and undisguised reaction. And De Maistre is the same in everything. He is not, like Danish reactionaries who call themselves Liberals, reactionary in social matters and religion, and liberal or half-liberal in politics. He loathes political liberty; he jeers (in his letters) at the emancipation of women; in a special essay he deliberately and warmly defends the Spanish Inquisition; and in all trueheartedness and manly seriousness he desires the reinstitution of the *auto-da-fé*, and is not ashamed to say it, seeing that he thinks it. Look well at such a man as this—gifted and eminent, great as a statesman, great as an author, who sacrifices his whole fortune sooner than make the least concession to the Revolution, which he abhors, or to Napoleon, whom he detests; who frankly adores the executioner as the indispensable upholder of order; who gives the gallows the most important place in his statute-book, and counsels the Church to have recourse to the axe and the faggot—there is a figure worthy of note; a proud, bold countenance, which expresses an unmistakable mental bent, and which one does not forget. This is a type one takes pleasure in, as the naturalist takes pleasure in a fine specimen of a species of which he has hitherto only met with imperfect and unsatisfactory examples. Looking at the matter from a practical point of view, it may be considered fortunate that

such personalities are not to be found in Danish literature, but their absence gives a less plastic character to its history.

It is all very well to say that we Danes only assimilated the good and healthy elements of German Romanticism. When we see how the German Romanticists end, we comprehend that from the very beginning there was concealed in Romanticism a reactionary principle which prescribed the course—the curve—of their careers.

Friedrich Schlegel, the author of *Lucinde*, the free-thinking admirer of Fichte, who, in his *Versuch uber den Begriff des Republikanismus* (Essay on the Idea of Republicanism), called the democratic republic, with female suffrage, the only reasonable form of government, is converted to Catholicism, becomes a mystic and a faithful servant of the Church, and in his later writings endeavours to promote the cause of reactionary absolutism. Novalis and Schleiermacher, who in their early writings display a mixture of pantheism and pietism, of Spinoza and Zinzendorf, steadily drift away from Spinoza and approach orthodoxy. In his later life Schleiermacher recants those *Letters on Lucinde* which he had written in a spirit of the purest youthful enthusiasm. Novalis, who in his youthful letters declares himself "prepared for any sort of enlightenment," and hopes that he may live to see "a new massacre of St. Bartholemew, a wholesale destruction of despotisms and prisons," who desires a republic, and who, at the time when Fichte is prosecuted for atheism, remarks, "Brave Fichte is really fighting for us all,"—this same Novalis ends by looking on the king in the light of an earthly Providence, condemning Protestantism as revolutionary, defending the temporal power of the Pope, and extolling the spirit of Jesuitism. Fouqué, the knight without fear and without reproach, becomes in the end a pietist Don Quixote, whose great desire is a return to the conditions of feudalism. Clemens Brentano, in his youth the most mettlesome of poets, who both in life and literature made war upon every species of convention, becomes the credulous secretary of a nun, a hysterical visionary; does nothing for the space of five years but fill volume after volume with the

sayings of Anna Katharina Emmerich. Zacharias Werner is a variant of the same Romantic type. He starts in his career as a friend of "enlightenment"; but soon a process of moral dissolution begins; he first extols Luther, then turns Roman Catholic and recants his eulogy; in the end he becomes a priest, and as such displays, both in his life and in his sentimentally gross writings and sermons, a combination of coarse sensuality and priestly unction.

And Steffens—he who stormed the heaven of German Romanticism, carried the sacred fire to Denmark, and set men's minds in such violent uproar that he was compelled to leave his country—what of him? what was he? An upright, weak character, with a brain charged with confused enthusiasms; all feeling and imitative fancy; no lucidity of thought or pregnant concision of style. It is literally impossible to read the so-called scientific writings of his later period; one runs the risk of being drowned in watery sentimentality or smothered by ennui. "When," says Julian Schmidt, "he expounded the *Naturphilosophie* in his broken German from the professorial chair, his mathematical calculations came out wrong and his experiments failed, but his audience was carried away by his earnestness, his almost religious solemnity, his naïve, child-like enthusiasm." Naïveté was a quality that the Northerner of those days seldom lacked. In his best days, Steffens, captivated by the theories of the *Naturphilosophie*, took an innocent pleasure in tracing the attributes of the human mind in minerals, in humanising geology and botany. But the Revolution of July turned his head. Inflamed by pietism, that elderly lady who for the last thirteen years had been the object of his affections, and for whose sake he had already more than once entered the lists, he closed his literary career with a series of feeble attacks upon the young writers of post-revolutionary Germany.

In this he was only following in the footsteps of his master, Schelling. Schelling, who, in marked contrast to Fichte with his clear doctrine of the Ego, dwells upon the mysterious nature of the mind, and bases not only philosophy, but also art and religion, upon the perception of genius, the

so-called "intellectual intuition," displays both in his doctrine and in his want of method the arbitrariness, the lawlessness, which is the kernel of Romanticism. As early as 1802, in his *Bruno*, he used the significant expression and future catchword, "Christian philosophy," though he still maintained that, in genuine religious value, the Bible is not to be compared with the sacred books of India—a theory which even Görres champions in the early stage of his literary career. Having, like Novalis, at Tieck's instigation, made a close study of Jakob Böhme and the other mystics, Schelling began to philosophise mystically on the subject of "Nature in God," an expression appropriated by Martensen in his *Spekulative Dogmatik*. But when, shortly afterwards, a patent of nobility was conferred on him (as professor at the University of Munich), and he was made President of the Academy of Science in Catholic and clerical Bavaria, the famous "Philosophy of Revelation" (Offenbarungsphilosophie) commenced to germinate in his mind. Soon the transformation was complete ; the fiery enthusiast had become a courtier, the prophet a charlatan. With his mysteries, his announcements of a marvellous science, "which had hitherto been considered impossible," his refusal to print his wisdom, to do anything but communicate it verbally, and even then not in its entirety, he qualified himself for being called, after Hegel's death, to Berlin, to lend a helping hand to State religion in the "Christian-Germanic" police-governed Prussia of the day, and to teach a State philosophy, for which, as he himself said, the only suitable name is Christology. Here it was that the young generation, the Hegelians of the Left, fell upon him and tore his mystic cobweb into a thousand pieces.

Yet Schelling is the least irrational of the Romantic philosophers. He is vehemently accused of heresy by Franz Baader, the reincarnated Jakob Böhme, the object of Kierkegaard's admiration, who reproaches him with setting the Trinity upon a logical balance-pole, and, still worse, with daring to deny the existence of a personal devil. The utterances of the others are in keeping with this. Schubert writes *The Symbolism of Dreams*—was not the dream the ideal of

Romanticism ?—occupies himself in all seriousness with interpreting them, happy in his persuasion that clairvoyance and visions are the highest sources of knowledge. The vision-seer of Prevorst, whom Strauss, characteristically enough, begins his public career by exposing, plays an important part in those days. Then there is Görres, who at the time of the great Revolution was "inspired to triumphal song by the fall of Rome and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire," and who afterwards took an active and honourable part in rousing German patriotic spirit during the struggle against Napoleon; this same Görres becomes the author of *Christian Mysticism* (a book which Kierkegaard read with shudders of awe), revels in the blood of martyrs, gloats over the agonies and ecstasies of the saints, enumerates the different aureoles, nail-prints, and wounds in the side by which they are distinguished, and prostrates himself in the dust, he, the old Jacobin, before the one true Catholic Church, chanting the praises of the Holy Alliance. To these add the politicians: Adam Müller, who, as Gotschall has aptly said, pursues in politics the quest of Novalis's "blue flower," who would fain fuse State, Science, Church, and Stage into one marvellous unit; Haller, who concealed his conversion to Catholicism in order to retain his appointments, and who, in his *Restauration der Staatswissenschaften* (Revival of the Science of Statesmanship), bases this science upon theocracy; Leo (scathingly criticised by Ruge), who, in the same spirit, inveighs against the humanity of the age and its reluctance to shed the blood of Radicals; and Stahl, who, in his *Philosophy of Law*, compares marriage to the relation between Christ and the Church, the family to the Trinity, and the earthly right of succession to man's right to the heavenly inheritance. Taking all this together, one feels as if Romanticism ended in a sort of witches' Sabbath, in which the philosophers play the part of the old crones, amidst the thunders of the obscurantists, the insane yells of the mystics, and the shouts of the politicians for temporal and ecclesiastical despotism, while theology and theosophy fall upon the sciences and suffocate them with their caresses.

I

THE PIONEERS OF ROMANTICISM

ANY one who makes acquaintance with the Germany of to-day, either by travelling in the country or by reading about it, and then compares it with the Germany of the beginning of the century, is astounded by the contrast. What a distance between then and now! Who would believe that this Realistic Germany had ever been a Romantic Germany!

Public utterances, private conversation, the very physiognomy of the towns, bear in our days a distinct stamp of realism. Walk along any street in Berlin, and you meet men in uniform, officers and privates, erect, decorated. The literature in the windows of the bookshops has for the most part a practical tendency. Even the furniture and ornaments are influenced by the new spirit. One cannot imagine anything more prosaic and warlike than the shop of a Berlin dealer in fancy articles. On the clocks, where of old a knight in armour knelt and kissed his lady's finger-tips, Uhlans and Cuirassiers now stand in full uniform. Conical bullets hang as trinkets from watch-chains, and piled muskets form candelabra. The metal in fashion is iron. The word in fashion is also iron. The present occupation of this nation of philosophers and poets is assuredly not poetry-writing and philosophising. Even highly cultured Germans know little about philosophy now-a-days—not one German student in twenty has read a word of Hegel; interest in poetry, as such, is practically dead; political and social questions rouse a hundred times more attention than problems of culture or psychical conundrums.

And this is the people which once was lost in Romantic reveries and speculations, and saw its prototype in Hamlet! Hamlet and Bismarck! Bismarck and Romanticism! Un-

questionably the great German statesman succeeded in carrying all Germany with him chiefly because he offered to his country in his own person the very qualities of which it had so long felt the want. Through him politics have been substituted for æsthetics. Germany has been united; the military monarchy has swallowed up the small States, and with them all their feudal idylls; Prussia has become the Piedmont of Germany, and has impressed its orderly and practical spirit upon the new empire; and simultaneously with this, natural science has supplanted or metamorphosed philosophy, and the idea of nationality has superseded or modified the "humanity" ideal. The War of Liberation of 1813 was pre-eminently a result of enthusiasm; the victories of 1870 were pre-eminently a result of the most careful calculation.

The idea which is the guiding star of the new Germany is the idea of organising itself as a whole. It pervades both life and literature. The expression "In Reih' und Glied"—In Ordered Ranks—(the title of a novel by Spielhagen) might be the universal watchword. The national aim is to gather together that which has been scattered, to diffuse the culture which has been the possession of too few, to found a great state, a great society; and it is required of the individual that he shall sacrifice his individuality for the sake of adding to the power of the whole, of the mass. The power of the mass! This idea may be traced in all the most remarkable phenomena of the age. Belief in it underlies the calculations of Bismarck, the agitation of Lassalle, the tactics of Moltke, and the music of Wagner. A desire to educate the people and unite them in a common aim is the mainspring of the literary activity of the prose authors of the period. A common feature of all the works which most clearly reflect the times is that they keep to the subject, to the matter in hand. The influence of the great idea, "the power of the mass," makes itself felt here too. In the new literature the relation of the individual to the State, the sacrifice of personal volition and originality entailed by the yoking of the Ego to the State chariot, presents itself in marked contrast to the Romanticist worship of the talented individual with

all his peculiarities, and the Romanticist indifference to everything historical and political. Romantic literature was always pre-eminently drawing-room literature, the ideal of Romanticism being intellectual society and æsthetic tea-parties (*vide* the conversations in Tieck's *Fantasus*).

How different everything was in those old days! In both life and literature the detached Ego, in its homeless independence, is omnipresent. The guiding star here is, indeed, nought else but the free, unhistorical Ego. The country is divided into a multitude of small States, ruled by three hundred sovereigns and fifteen hundred semi-sovereigns. In these States the so-called "enlightened" despotism of the eighteenth century prevails, with its narrow, petrified social conditions and relations. The nobleman is lord and master of his serfs, the father, lord and master of his family—everywhere stern justice, but no equity. There are in reality no great tasks for the individual, hence there is no room for genius. The theatre is the only place where those who are not of princely birth can gain any experience of all the manifold phases of human life, hence the stage mania of literature. Lacking any social field in which to work, all activity necessarily takes the form either of war with reality or flight from it. Flight is prepared for by the influence of the rediscovered antique and of Winckelmann's writings; war, by the influence of the sentimentally melancholy English writers (Young, Sterne) and of Rousseau, reverenced as the apostle of nature, who, as Schiller expressed it, "would fain out of Christians make men."

Our first proceeding must be to trace the rising of this star, the genesis of this free, Romantic Ego, to whom, be it remembered, all the greatest intellects of Germany stood sponsor.

It was Lessing who laid the foundations of the intellectual life of modern Germany. Clear of thought, strong of will, indefatigably active, he was a reformer in every matter in which he interested himself. With perfect consciousness of what he was doing, he enlightened and educated the German mind. He was the embodiment of manly independence and vigorous, tireless militancy. His personal ideal, as it is revealed in his life and writings, was proud independence in com-

bination with a wise love of his fellow-men, which overcame all differences of creed. Hence, solitary as he stood in his own day, his Ego became a source of light. He was the "Prometheus of German prose." His great achievement was that of freeing German culture for all time from the swaddling bands of theology, as Luther had freed it from those of Catholicism. His life and his criticism were action, and to him the essence of poetry too was action. All his characters are instinct with dramatic passion. In opposition to the theological doctrine of punishment and reward, he maintained that to do right for the sake of doing right is the highest morality. And for him the history of the world became the history of the education of the human race. To a certain extent the word "education" is employed by him merely as a concession to his readers, who, he knew, could not conceive of any development without a divine educator; but, all the same, the idea of natural development is not an idea with which he was familiar. To him, history is the record of "enlightenment." The Ego to him is not nature, but pure mind.

In reality, all that was best in Lessing was entirely unsympathetic to the new group of Romanticists; they had less in common with him than with any other of the great German authors, Schiller not excepted. Nevertheless, it was natural enough that they should refuse to acknowledge any connection between Lessing and those of his disciples (men such as Nicolai, Engel, Garve, and Schütz), who were, from the "enlightenment" standpoint, their bitter enemies and ruthless persecutors. This was done by Friedrich Schlegel in an essay in which, while praising the power and the width of Lessing's grasp, he lays chief stress upon everything in him that is irregular, boldly revolutionary, unsystematic, and paradoxical, dwells on his bellicose wit, and draws attention to everything that can be construed into cynicism. The Romanticists could not possibly claim a champion of reason, pure and simple, as their forerunner, hence they attempted to characterise the nutritive element in Lessing's works as mere seasoning, as the salt which preserves from corruption.

They owed far more to Herder. They evidence their descent from him both by their continuation of the *Sturm und Drang* period and by their capacity of understanding and reproducing the poetry of all countries. In Herder the new century germinated, as in Lessing the old had come to its close. Herder sets genesis and growth above thought and action. To him the true man is not only a thinking and moral being, but a portion of nature. He loves and sets most store by the original ; he prefers intuition to reason, and would overcome narrow-mindedness, not by reason, but by originality. The man of intuitions is to him the most human. His own genius was the genius of receptivity. He expanded his Ego until it comprehended every kind of originality, but it was by virtue of feeling that he comprehended, that he absorbed into his soul a wealth of life, human and national.

From Herder the Romanticists derive that which is most valuable in their literary criticism—the universal receptivity which finds expression in the impulse to translate and explain ; from him they derive the first stimulus to a scientific study of both European and Asiatic languages ; from him comes their love for what is national in both their own and foreign literature, their love of Spanish romance and of Shakespeare's plays. Herder grasped things in their entirety as did Goethe after him. His profound comprehension of national peculiarities becomes in Goethe the genius's intuition of the typical in nature, and is exalted by Schelling under the name of "intellectual intuition." The objection of the Romanticists to the idea of aim or purpose may be traced back to Herder. His theory of history excluded the idea of purpose : what happens has a cause and is subject to laws, but cannot be explained by anything which has not yet happened, *i.e.* by a purpose. The Romanticists transferred this theory into the personal, the psychical domain. To them purposelessness is another name for Romantic genius ; the man of genius lives without a definite purpose; purposelessness is idleness, and idleness is the mark and privilege of the elect. In this caricature of a philosophy there is

not much resemblance to Herder's. But he is the originator of a new conception of genius, of the belief, namely, that genius is intuitive, that it consists in a certain power of perceiving and apprehending without any resort to abstract ideas. It is this conception which, with the Romanticists, becomes scorn of experimental methods in science, and approbation of extraordinary vagaries in art.

Goethe was the fulfilment of all that Herder had promised. To him man was not merely theoretically the last link in nature's chain; the men in his works were themselves natures; and in his scientific research he discerned with the eye of genius the universal laws of evolution. His own Ego was a microcosm, and produced the effect of such on the most discerning of his younger contemporaries. "Goethe and life are one," says Rahel. So profound was his insight into nature, so entirely was he a living protest against every supernatural belief, that he did what in him lay to deprive genius of its character of apparent incomprehensibility and contrariety to reason, by explaining (in his autobiography, *Wahrheit und Dichtung*) his own genius, the most profound and universal of the age, as a natural product developed by circumstances—thereby creating the type of literary criticism to which the Romanticists were strongly opposed.

From Goethe the young generation derived their theory of the rights and the importance of the great, free personality. He had always lived his own life, and had always lived it fully and freely. Without making any attack whatever on the existing conditions of society, he had remoulded, according to his own requirements, the social relations in which he found himself placed. He becomes the soul of the youthful and joyous court of Weimar, with the audacity of youth and genius drawing every one with him into a whirl of gaiety—fêtes, picnics, skating expeditions, masquerades—animated by a wild joy in nature, which is now "lightened," now "darkened" by love affairs of a more or less dubious character. Jean Paul writes to a friend that he can only describe the morals of Weimar to him by word

of mouth. When we hear that even skating was a scandal to the worthy Philistines of that town, we are not surprised by old Wieland's ill-natured remark, that the circle in question appeared to him to be aiming at "brutalising animal nature." Thus it was that the sweet, refined coquette, Frau von Stein, became Goethe's muse for ten whole years, the original of Leonore and Iphigenia; and later he created a still greater scandal by taking into his house Christiane Vulpius (the young girl whose presence had become a necessity to him, and who, in spite of her faults, never embittered his life by making any demands upon him), and living with her for eighteen years before obtaining the sanction of the Church to their union.

Goethe's as well as Schiller's youthful works had been inspired by what the Germans call the "Freigeisterei" of passion, its demand for freedom, its instinct of revolt. Both breathe one and the same spirit, the spirit of defiance. Goethe's *Die Geschwister* treats of the passion of brother for sister. The conclusion of *Stella*, in its original form, is a justification of bigamy; and Jean Paul, too, in his *Siebenkäs*, treats of bigamy as a thing perfectly permissible in the case of a genius to whom the first tie has become burdensome. *Götz* represents the tragic fate of the man of genius who rises in revolt against a lukewarm and corrupt age. Schiller's *Die Räuber*, with its device *In Tyrannos*, and its motto from Hippocrates, "That which medicine cannot cure iron cures, and that which iron cannot cure fire cures," is a declaration of war against society. Karl Moor is the noble-hearted idealist, who in "the castrated century" is inevitably doomed to perish as a criminal. Schiller's robbers are not highwaymen, but revolutionaries. They do not plunder, but punish. They have separated themselves from society to revenge themselves upon it for the wrongs it has done them. Schiller's defiance is still more personally expressed in those poems of his first period which were written under the influence of his relations with Frau von Kalb, poems re-written and entirely altered in the later editions. In the one which ultimately received the

title *Der Kampf*, but which was originally called *Freigeisterei der Leidenschaft*, he writes :—

"Woher dies Zittern, dies unnennbare Entsetzen,
Wenn mich dein liebevoller Arm umschlang?
Weil Dich ein Eid, den auch nur Wallungen verletzen,
In fremde Fesseln zwang?

"Weil ein Gebrauch, den die Gesetze heilig prägen,
Des Zufalls schwere Missethat geweiht?
Nein—unerschrocken trotz ich einem Bund entgegen,
Den die erröthende Natur bereut.

"O zittre nicht—Du hast als Sünderin geschworen,
Ein Meineid ist der Reue fromme Pflicht,
Das Herz war mein, das Du vor dem Altar verloren,
Mit Menschenfreuden spielt der Himmel nicht."[1]

Comical as this naïve sophistry sounds, and unreliable as is the assurance that Heaven will not permit itself now and again to play with human happiness, the spirit of the verses is unmistakable; and, as Hettner aptly observes, Don Carlos uses almost the same words: "The rights of my love are older than the ceremonies at the altar."

The model for Schiller's young Queen Elizabeth was Charlotte von Kalb. This lady, the passion of the poet's youth, had been unwillingly forced into matrimony by her parents. She and Schiller met in 1784, and in 1788 they were still meditating a permanent union of their destinies. Soon after Schiller left her, she became Jean Paul's mistress. (Caroline Schlegel jestingly calls her Jeannette Pauline.) Jean Paul characterises her thus: "She has two great possessions: great eyes (I never saw their like) and a great soul." He himself confesses that it is she whom he has described in one of his principal works as the

[1] Whence this trembling, this nameless horror, when thy loving arms encircle me? Is it because an oath, which, remember, even a thought is sufficient to break, has forced strange fetters on thee?

Because a ceremony, which the laws have decreed to be sacred, has hallowed an accidental, grievous crime? Nay—fearlessly defy a covenant of which blushing nature repents.

O tremble not!—thine oath was a sin; perjury is the sacred duty of the repentant sinner; the heart thou gavest away at the altar was mine; Heaven does not play with human happiness.

Titaness, Linda. In *Titan* (118 Zykel) we are told of Linda that she must be tenderly treated, not only on account of her delicacy, but also in the matter of her aversion to matrimony, which is extreme. She cannot even accompany a friend to the altar, which she calls the scaffold of woman's liberty, the funeral pyre of the noblest, freest love. To take, she says, the best possible view of it, the heroic epic of love is there transformed into the pastoral of marriage. Her sensible friend vainly insists that her aversion to marriage can have no other ground than her hatred of priests; that wedlock only signifies everlasting love, and all true love regards itself as everlasting; that there are as many unhappy free-love connections as marriages, if not more, &c.

Frau von Kalb herself writes to Jean Paul: "Why all this talk about seduction? Spare the poor creatures, I beg of you, and alarm their hearts and consciences no more. Nature is petrified enough already. I shall never change my opinion on this subject; I do not understand this virtue, and cannot call any one blessed for its sake. Religion here upon earth is nothing else than the development and maintenance of the powers and capacities with which our natures have been endowed. Man should not submit to compulsion, but neither should he acquiesce in wrongful renunciation. Let the bold, powerful, mature human nature, which knows and uses its strength, have its way. But in our generation human nature is weak and contemptible. Our laws are the outcome of wretchedness and dire necessity, seldom of wisdom. Love needs no laws."

A vigorous mind speaks to us in this letter. The leap from this to the idea of *Lucinde* is not a long one, but the fall to the very vulgar elaboration of *Lucinde* is great. We do not, however, rightly understand these outbursts until we understand the social conditions which produced them, and realise that they are not isolated and accidental tirades, but are conditioned by the position in which the majority of poetic natures stood to society at that time.

Weimar was then the headquarters and gathering-place of Germany's classical authors. It is not difficult to under-

stand how they came to gather in this little capital of a little dukedom. Of Germany's two great monarchs, Joseph the Second was too much occupied with his efforts at reform, too eager for the spread of "enlightenment," to have any attention to spare for German poetry; and the Voltairean Frederick of Prussia was too French in his tastes and intellectual tendencies to take any interest in German poets. It was at the small courts that they were welcomed. Schiller lived at Mannheim, Jean Paul at Gotha, Goethe at Weimar. Poetry had had no stronghold in Germany for many a long year, but now Weimar became one. Thither Goethe summoned Herder; Wieland had been there since 1772. Schiller received an appointment in the adjacent Jena. Weimar was, then, the place where passion, as poetical, compared with the prosaic conventions of society, was worshipped most recklessly and with least prejudice, in practice as well as theory. "Ah! here we have women!" cries Jean Paul when he comes to Weimar. "Everything is revolutionarily daring here; that a woman is married signifies nothing." Wieland "revives himself" by taking his former mistress, Sophie von la Roche, into his house, and Schiller invites Frau von Kalb to accompany him to Paris.

We thus understand how it was that Jean Paul, when in Weimar, and under the influence of Frau von Kalb's personality, exclaimed: "This much is certain; the heart of the world is beating with a more spiritual and greater revolution than the political, and one quite as destructive."

What revolution? The emancipation of feeling from the conventions of society; the heart's audacious assumption of its right to regard its own code of laws as the new moral code, to re-cast morals in the interests of morality, and occasionally in the interests of inclination. The Weimar circle had no desire, no thought for anything beyond this, had neither practical nor social reforms in view. It is a genuinely German trait that outwardly they made deep obeisance to the laws which they privately evaded. In conversation, Goethe, in his riper years, invariably maintained that the existing conventions regulating the relations of the sexes were absolutely necessary in the

interests of civilisation; and in their books authors gave expression to revolutionary sentiments which were more or less their own, only to recant at the end of the book. The hero either confesses his error, or commits suicide, or is punished for his defiance of society, or renounces society altogether (Karl Moor, Werther, Tasso, Linda). It is exactly the proceeding of the heretical authors of the Middle Ages, who concluded their books with a notice that everything in them must of course be interpreted in harmony with the doctrines and decrees of Holy Mother Church.

Into this Weimar circle of gifted women Madame de Staël, "the whirlwind in petticoats," as she has been called, is introduced when she comes to Germany. In the midst of them she produces the effect of some strange wild bird. What a contrast between her aims and their predilections! With them everything is personal, with her by this time everything is social. She has appeared before the public; she is striking doughty blows in the cause of social reform. For such deeds even the most advanced of these German women of the "enlightenment" period are of much too mild a strain. Her aim is to revolutionise life politically, theirs to make it poetical. The idea of flinging the gauntlet to a Napoleon would never have entered the mind of any one of them. What a use to make of a lady's glove, a pledge of love! It is not the rights of humanity, but the rights of the heart which they understand; their strife is not against the wrongs of life but against its prose. The relation of the gifted individual to society does not here, as in France, take the form of a conflict between the said individual's rebellious assertion of his liberty and the traditional compulsion of society, but of a conflict between the poetry of the desires of the individual and the prose of political and social conventions. Hence the perpetual glorification in Romantic literature of capacity and strength of desire, of wish; a subject to which Friedrich Schlegel in particular perpetually recurs. It is in reality the one outwardly directed power that men possess—impotence itself conceived as a power.

We find the same admiration of *wish* in Kierkegaard's *Enten-Eller* (Either-Or). "The reason why *Aladdin* is so

refreshing is that we feel the childlike audacity of genius in its wildly fantastic wishes. How many are there in our day who dare really wish?" &c. The childlike, for ever the childlike! But who can wonder that *wish*, the mother of religions, the outward expression of inaction, became the catchword of the Romanticists? *Wish* is poetry; society as it exists, prose. It is only when we judge them from this standpoint that we rightly understand even the most serene, most chastened works of Germany's greatest poets. Goethe's *Tasso*, with its conflict between the statesman and the poet (*i.e.* between reality and poetry), its delineation of the contrast between these two who complete each other, and are only unlike "because nature did not make one man of them," is, in spite of its crystalline limpidity of style and its keynote of resignation, a product of the self-same long fermentation which provides the Romantic School with all its fermentative matter. The theme of *Wilhelm Meister* is in reality the same. It, too, represents the gradual, slow reconciliation and fusion of the dreamed of ideal and the earthly reality. But only the greatest minds rose to this height; the main body of writers of considerable, but less lucid intellect never got beyond the inward discord. The more poetry became conscious of itself as a power, the more the poet realised his dignity, and literature became a little world in itself with its own special technical interests, the more distinctly did the conflict with reality assume the subordinate form of a conflict with philistinism (see, for instance, Eichendorff's *Krieg den Philistern*). Poetry no longer champions the eternal rights of liberty against the tyranny of outward circumstances; it champions itself as poetry against the prose of life. This is the Teutonic, the German-Scandinavian, that is to say, the narrow literary conception of the service that poetry is capable of rendering to the cause of liberty.

"We must remember," says Kierkegaard (*Begrebet Ironi*, p. 322), "that Tieck and the entire Romantic School entered, or believed they entered, into relations with a period in which men were, so to speak, petrified, in final, unalterable social conditions. Everything was perfected and completed,

in a sort of divine Chinese perfection, which left no reasonable longing unsatisfied, no reasonable wish unfulfilled. The glorious principles and maxims of 'use and wont' were the objects of a pious worship; everything, including the absolute itself, was absolute; men refrained from polygamy; they wore peaked hats; nothing was without its significance. Each man felt, with the precise degree of dignity that corresponded to his position, what he effected, the exact importance to himself and to the whole, of his unwearied endeavour. There was no frivolous indifference to punctuality in those days; all ungodliness of that kind tried to insinuate itself in vain. Everything pursued its tranquil, ordered course; even the suitor went soberly about his business; he knew that he was going on a lawful errand, was taking a most serious step. Everything went by clockwork. Men waxed enthusiastic over the beauties of nature on Midsummer Day; were overwhelmed by the thought of their sins on the great fast-days; fell in love when they were twenty, went to bed at ten o'clock. They married and devoted themselves to domestic and civic duties; they brought up families; in the prime of their manhood notice was taken in high places of their honourable and successful efforts; they lived on terms of intimacy with the pastor, under whose eye they did the many generous deeds which they knew he would recount in a voice trembling with emotion when the day came for him to preach their funeral sermon. They were friends in the genuine sense of the word, *ein wirklicher Freund, wie man wirklicher Kanzleirat war.*"

I fail to see anything typical in this description. Except that we wear round hats instead of peaked ones, every word of it might apply to the present day; there is nothing especially indicative of one period more than another. No; the distinctive feature of the period in question is the gifted writer's, the Romanticist's, conception of philistinism. In my criticism of Johan Ludvig Heiberg's first Romantic attempts, I wrote: "They (the Romanticists) looked upon it from the philosophical point of view as finality, from the intellectual, as narrow-mindedness; not, like us, from the moral point of view, as contemptibility. With it they con-

trasted their own infinite longing. . . . They confronted its prose with their own youthful poetry; we confront its contemptibility with our virile will" (*Samlede Skrifter*, i. p. 467). As a general rule, then, they, with their thoughts and longings, fled society and reality, though now and again, as already indicated, they attempted, if not precisely to realise their ideas in life, at least to sketch a possible solution of the problem how to transform reality in its entirety into poetry.

Not that they show a spark of the indignation or the initiative which we find in the French Romantic author (George Sand, for instance); they merely amuse themselves with elaborating revolutionary, or at least startling fancies.

That which Goethe had attained to, namely, the power of moulding his surroundings to suit his own personal requirements, was to the young generation the point of departure. In this particular they from their youth saw the world from Goethe's point of view; they made the measure of freedom which he had won for himself and the conditions which had been necessary for the full development of his gifts and powers, the average, or more correctly the minimum, requirement of every man with talent, no matter how little. They transformed the requirements of his nature into a universal rule, ignored the self-denial he had laboriously practised and the sacrifices he had made, and not only proclaimed the unconditional rights of passion, but, with tiresome levity and pedantic lewdness, preached the emancipation of the senses. And another influence, very different from that of Goethe's powerful self-assertion, also made itself felt, namely, the influence of Berlin. To Goethe's free, unrestrained humanity there was added in Berlin an ample alloy of the scoffing, anti-Christian spirit which had emanated from the court of Frederick the Great, and the licence which had prevailed at that of his successor.

But both Goethe and Schiller paved the way for Romanticism not only positively, by their proclamation of the rights of passion, but also negatively, by the conscious attitude of opposition to their own age which they assumed in their

later years. In another form, the Romanticist's aversion to reality is already to be found in them. I adduce two famous instances of the astonishing lack of interest shown by Goethe, the greatest creative mind of the day, in political realities; they prove at the same time how keen was his interest in science. Writing of the campaign against France during the French Revolution, a campaign in which he took part, he mentions that he spent most of his time in observing "various phenomena of colour and of personal courage." And after the battle of Jena Knebel writes: "Goethe has been busy with optics the whole time. We study osteology under his guidance, the times being well adapted to such study, as all the fields are covered with preparations." The bodies of his fallen countrymen did not inspire the poet with odes; he dissected them and studied their bones.

Such instances as these give us some impression of the attitude of aloofness which Goethe as a poet maintained towards the events of his day. But we must not overlook the fine side of his refusal to write patriotic war-songs during the struggle with Napoleon. "Would it be like me to sit in my room and write war-songs? In the night bivouacs, when we could hear the horses of the enemy's outposts neighing, then I might possibly have done it. But it was not my life, that, and not my affair; it was Theodor Körner's. Therefore his war-songs become him well. I have not a warlike nature nor warlike tastes, and war-songs would have been a mask very unbecoming to me. I have never been artificial in my poetry." Goethe, like his disciple Heiberg, was in this case led to refrain by the strong feeling that he only cared to write of what he had himself experienced; but he also tells us that he regarded themes of a historical nature as "the most dangerous and most thankless."

His ideal, and that of the whole period, is humanity pure and simple — a man's private life is everything. The tremendous conflicts of the eighteenth century and the "enlightenment" period are all, in consonance with the human idealism of the day, contained in the life story, the development story, of the individual. But the cult of

humanity does not only imply lack of interest in history, but also a general lack of interest in the subject for its own sake. In one of his letters to Goethe, Schiller writes that two things are to be demanded of the poet and of the artist —in the first place, that he shall rise above reality, and in the second, that he shall keep within the bounds of the material, the natural. He explains his meaning thus: The artist who lives amidst unpropitious, formless surroundings, and consequently ignores these surroundings in his art, runs the risk of altogether losing touch with the tangible, of becoming abstract, or, if his mind is not of a robust type, fantastic; if, on the other hand, he keeps to the world of reality, he is apt to be too real, and, if he has little imagination, to copy slavishly and vulgarly. These words indicate, as it were, the watershed which divides the German literature of this period. On the one side we have the unnational art-poetry of Goethe and Schiller, with its continuation in the fantasies of the Romanticists, and on the other side the merely sensational or entertaining literature of the hour (Unterhaltungslitteratur), which is based on reality, but a philistine reality, the literature of which Lafontaine's sentimental bourgeois romances, and the popular, prosaic family dramas of Schröder, Iffland, and Kotzebue, are the best known examples. It was a misfortune for German literature that such a division came about. But, although the rupture of the better literature with reality first showed itself in a startling form in the writings of the Romanticists, we must not forget that the process had begun long before. Kotzebue had been the antipodes of Schiller and Goethe before he stood in that position to the Romanticists. Of this we get a vivid impression from the following anecdote.[1]

One day in the early spring of 1802, the little town of Weimar was in the greatest excitement over an event which was the talk of high and low. It had long been apparent that some special festivity was in preparation. It was known that a very famous and highly respected man, President

[1] Goethe, *Tag- und Jahreshefte*, 1802; G. Waitz, *Caroline*, ii. 207; *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, vi. 59, &c.

von Kotzebue, had applied privately to the Burgomaster for the use of the newly decorated Town Hall. The most distinguished ladies of the town had for a month past done nothing but order and try on fancy dresses. Fräulein von Imhof had given fifty gold guldens for hers. Astonished eyes had beheld a carver and gilder carrying a wonderful helmet and banner across the street in broad daylight. What could such things be required for? Were there to be theatricals at the Town Hall? It was known that an enormous bell mould made of pasteboard had been ordered. For what was it to be used? The secret soon came out. Some time before this, Kotzebue, famous throughout Europe as the author of *Menschenhass und Reue*, had returned, laden with Russian roubles and provided with a patent of nobility, to his native town, to make a third in the Goethe and Schiller alliance. He had succeeded in gaining admission to the court, and the next thing was to obtain admission to Goethe's circle, which was also a court, and a very exclusive one. The private society of intimates for whom Goethe wrote his immortal convivial songs (Gesellschaftslieder) met once a week at his house. Kotzebue had himself proposed for election by some of the lady members, but Goethe added an amendment to the rules of the society which excluded the would-be intruder, and prevented his even appearing occasionally as a guest. Kotzebue determined to revenge himself by paying homage to Schiller in a manner which he hoped would thoroughly annoy Goethe. The latter had just suppressed some thrusts at the brothers Schlegel in Kotzebue's play, *Die Kleinstädter*, which was one of the pieces in the repertory of the Weimar theatre; so, to damage the theatre, Kotzebue determined to give a grand performance in honour of Schiller at the Town Hall. Scenes from all his plays were to be acted, and finally *The Bell* was to be recited to an accompaniment of tableaux vivants. At the close of the poem, Kotzebue, dressed as the master-bellfounder, was to shatter the pasteboard mould with a blow of his hammer, and there was to be disclosed, not a bell, but a bust of Schiller. The Kotzebue party, however, had reckoned without their host,

that is to say, without Goethe. In all Weimar there was only one bust of Schiller, that which stood in the library. When, on the last day, a messenger was sent to borrow it, the unexpected answer was given, that never in the memory of man had a plaster cast lent for a fête been returned in the condition in which it had been sent, and that the loan must therefore be unwillingly refused. And one can imagine the astonishment and rage of the allies when they heard that the carpenters, arriving at the Town Hall with their boards, laths, and poles, had found the doors locked and had received an intimation from the Burgomaster and Council that, as the hall had been newly painted and decorated, they could not permit it to be used for such a "riotous" entertainment.

This is only a small piece of provincial town scandal. But what is really remarkable, what constitutes the kernel of the story, is the fact that the whole company of distinguished ladies who had hitherto upheld the fame of Goethe (Countess Henriette von Egloffstein; the beautiful lady of honour and poetess Amalie von Imhof, at a later period the object of Gentz's adoration, whose fifty gold guldens had been wasted, &c., &c.) took offence, and deserted his camp for that of Kotzebue. Even the Countess Einsiedel, whom Goethe had always specially distinguished, went over to the enemy. This shows how little real hold the higher culture had as yet taken even on the highest intellectual and social circles, and how powerful the man of letters still was who concerned himself with real life and sought his subjects in his surroundings.

There had, most undoubtedly, been a time when Goethe and Schiller themselves were realists. To both, in their first stage of restless ferment, reality had been a necessity. Both had given free play to nature and feeling in their early productions, Goethe in *Götz* and *Werther*, Schiller in *Die Raüber*. But after *Götz* had set the fashion of romances of chivalry and highway robbery, *Werther* of suicide, both in real life and in fiction, and *Die Raüber* of such productions as *Abällino, der grosse Bandit*, the great writers, finding the reading world unable to discriminate between originals and

imitations, withdrew from the arena. Their interest in the subject was lost in their interest in the form. The study of the antique led them to lay ever-increasing weight upon artistic perfection. It was not their lot to find a public which understood them, much less a people that could present them with subjects, make demands of them —give them orders, so to speak. The German people were still too undeveloped. When Goethe, at Weimar, was doing what he could to help Schiller, he found that the latter, on account of his wild life at Mannheim, his notoriety as a political refugee, and especially his penniless-ness, was regarded as a writer of most unfortunate antecedents. During the epigram war (Xenienkampf) of 1797, both Goethe and Schiller were uniformly treated as poets of doubtful talent. One of the pamphlets against them is dedicated to "die zwei Sudelköche in Weimar und Jena" (the bunglers of Weimar and Jena). It was Napoleon's recognition of Goethe, his wish to see and converse with him, his exclamation: "Voilà un homme!" which greatly helped to establish Goethe's reputation in Germany. A Prussian staff-officer, who was quartered about this time in the poet's house, had never heard his name. His publisher complained bitterly of the small demand for the collected edition of his works; there was a much better sale for those of his brother-in-law, Vulpius (author of *Rinaldo Rinaldini*). *Tasso* and *Iphigenia* could not compete with works of such European fame as Kotzebue's *Menschenhass und Reue;* Goethe himself tells us that they were only performed in Weimar once every three or four years. Clearly enough it was the stupidity of the public which turned the great poets from the popular path to glory; but it is equally clear that the new classicism, which they so greatly favoured, was an ever-increasing cause of their unpopularity. Only two of Goethe's works were distinct successes, *Werther* and *Hermann und Dorothea.*

What were the proceedings of the two great poets after they turned their backs upon their surroundings? Goethe made the story of his own strenuous intellectual development the subject of plastic poetic treatment. But finding

it impossible, so long as he absorbed himself in modern humanity, to attain to the beautiful simplicity of the old Greeks, he began to purge his works of the personal ; he composed symbolical poems and allegories, wrote *Die Natürliche Tochter*, in which the characters simply bear the names of their callings, King, Ecclesiastic, &c. ; and the neo-classic studies, *Achilleis*, *Pandora*, *Palæophron und Neoterpe*, *Epimenides*, and the *Second Part of Faust*. He began to employ Greek mythology much as it had been employed in French classical literature, namely, as a universally understood metaphorical language. He no longer, as in the *First Part of Faust*, treated the individual as a type, but produced types which were supposed to be individuals. His own *Iphigenia* was now too modern for him. Ever more marked became that addiction to allegory which led Thorvaldsen too away from life in his art. In his art criticism Goethe persistently maintained that it is not truth to nature, but truth to art which is all-important ; he preferred ideal mannerism (such as is to be found in his own drawings preserved in his house in Frankfort) to ungainly but vigorous naturalism. As theatrical director he acted on these same principles ; grandeur and dignity were everything to him. He upheld the conventional tragic style of Calderon and Alfieri, Racine and Voltaire. His actors were trained, in the manner of the ancients, to stand like living statues ; they were forbidden to turn profile or back to the audience, or to speak up the stage ; in some plays, in defiance of the customs of modern mimic art, they wore masks. In spite of public opposition, he put A. W. Schlegel's *Ion* on the stage—a professedly original play, in reality an unnatural adaptation from Euripides, suggested by *Iphigenia*. Nay, he actually insisted, merely for the sake of exercising the actors in reciting verse, on producing Friedrich Schlegel's *Alarkos*, an utterly worthless piece, which might have been written by a talentless schoolboy, and was certain to be laughed off the stage.[1] To such an extent as this

[1] "Your opinion of *Alarkos* is mine ; nevertheless I think that we must dare everything, outward success or non-success being of no consequence whatever. Our gain seems to me to lie principally in the fact that we accustom our actors to repeat, and ourselves to hear, this extremely accurate metre."—*Goethe.*

did he gradually sacrifice everything to external artistic form.

It is easy, then, to see how Goethe's one-sidedness prepared the way for that of the Romanticists ; it is not so easy to show that the same was the case with Schiller. Schiller's dramas seem like prophecies of actual events. The French Revolution ferments in *Die Räuber* (the play which procured for "Monsieur Gille" the title of honorary citizen of the French Republic), and, as Gottschall observes, "the eighteenth Brumaire is anticipated in *Fiesko*, the eloquence of the Girondists in *Posa*, the Cæsarian soldier-spirit in *Wallenstein*, and the Wars of Liberation in *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* and *Wilhelm Tell*." But in reality it is only in his first dramas that Schiller allows himself to be influenced, without second thought or ulterior purpose, by his theme. In all the later plays the competent critic at once feels how largely the choice of subject has been influenced by considerations of form. Henrik Ibsen once drew my attention to this in speaking of *Die Jungfrau von Orleans;* he maintained that there is no "experience" in that play, that it is not the result of powerful personal impressions, but is a composition. And Hettner has shown this to be the relation of the author to his work in all the later plays. From the year 1798 onwards, Schiller's admiration for Greek tragedy led him to be always on the search for subjects in which the Greek idea of destiny prevailed. *Der Ring des Polykrates*, *Der Taucher*, and *Wallenstein* are dominated by the idea of Nemesis. *Maria Stuart* is modelled upon the *Œdipus Rex* of Sophocles, and this particular historical episode is chosen with the object of having a theme in which the tragic end, the appointed doom, is foreknown, so that the drama merely gradually develops that which is inevitable from the beginning. The subject of the *Jungfrau von Orleans*, in appearance so romantic, is chosen because Schiller desired to deal with an episode in which, after the antique manner, a direct divine message reached the human soul—in which there is a direct material interposition of the divinity, and yet the human being who is the organ of the divinity can be ruined, in genuine Greek fashion, by her human weakness.

It was only in keeping with his general unrealistic tendency that Schiller, though he was not in the least musical, should extol the opera at the expense of the drama, and maintain the antique chorus to be far more awe-inspiring than modern tragic dialogue. In *Die Braut von Messina* he himself produced a "destiny" tragedy, which to all intents and purposes is a study in the manner of Sophocles. Not even in *Wilhelm Tell* is his point of view a modern one; on the contrary, it is in every particular purely Hellenic. The subject is not conceived dramatically, but epically. The individual is marked by no special characteristic. It is merely an accident that raises Tell above the mass and makes him the leader of the movement. He is, as Goethe says, a "sort of Demos." Hence it is not the conflict between two great, irreconcilable historical ideas that is presented in this play; the men of Rütli have no sentimental attachment to liberty; it is neither the idea of liberty nor the idea of country that produces the insurrection. Private ideas and private interests, encroachments on family rights and rights of property, here provide the mainspring of action, or rather of event, which in the other dramas is provided by personal or dynastic ambition. It is explicitly signified to us that the peasants do not aim at acquiring new liberties, but at maintaining old inherited customs. On this point I may refer the reader to Lasalle, who develops the same view with his usual ingenuity in the interesting preface to his drama, *Franz von Sickingen*.

Thus, then, we see that even when Schiller, the most political and historical of the German poets, appears to be most interested in history and politics, he is dealing only to a limited extent with reality; and therefore it may be almost considered proved, that distaste for historical and present reality—in other words, subjectivism and idealism—were the characteristics of the whole literature of that day.

But the spirit of Herder, Goethe, and Schiller is only one of the motive powers of Romanticism. The other is the philosophy of Fichte. It was the Fichtean doctrine of the Ego which gave to the Romantic individuality its character and force. The axioms: All that is, is for us;

What is for us can only be through us ; Everything that is, both natural and supernatural, exists through the *activity of the Ego*, received an entirely new interpretation when transferred from the domain of metaphysics to that of psychology. All reality is contained in the Ego itself, hence the absolute Ego demands that the non-Ego which it posits shall be in harmony with it, and is itself simply the infinite striving to pass beyond its own limits. It was this conclusion of the *Wissenschaftslehre* (Doctrine of Knowledge) which fired the young generation. By the absolute Ego they understood, as Fichte himself in reality did, though in a very different manner, not a divine being, but the thinking human being. And this new and intoxicating idea of the absolute freedom and power and self-sufficiency of the Ego, which, with the arbitrariness of an autocratic monarch, obliges the whole world to shrink into nothing before itself, is enthusiastically proclaimed by an absurdly arbitrary, ironical, and fantastic set of young geniuses, half-geniuses, and quarter-geniuses. The *Sturm und Drang* period, when the liberty men gloried in was the liberty of eighteenth-century "enlightenment," reappeared in a more refined and idealistic form ; and the liberty now gloried in was nineteenth-century lawlessness.

Fichte's doctrine of a world-positing, world-creating Ego was at variance with "sound human reason." This was one of its chief recommendations in the eyes of the Romanticists. The *Wissenschaftslehre* was scientific paradox, but to them paradox was the fine flower of thought. Moreover, the fundamental idea of the doctrine was as radical as it was paradoxical. It had been evolved under the impression of the attempt made by the French Revolution to transform the whole traditional social system into a rational system (Vernunftstaat). The autocracy of the Ego was Fichte's conception of the order of the world, and therefore in this doctrine of the Ego the Romanticists believed that they possessed the lever with which they could lift the old world from its hinges.

The Romantic worship of imagination had already begun with Fichte. He explained the world as the result of an unconscious, yet to a thinker comprehensible, act of the

free, yet at the same time limited, Ego. This act, he maintains, emanates from the creative imagination. By means of it the world which we apprehend with the senses first becomes to us a real world. The whole activity of the human mind, then, according to Fichte, springs from the creative imagination ; it is the instinct which he regards as the central force of the active Ego. The analogy with the imaginative power which is so mighty in art is evident. But what Fichte himself failed to perceive is, that imagination is by no means a creative, but only a transforming, remodelling power, since what it acts upon is only the form of the things conceived of, not their substance.

Fichte says that he "does not require 'things,' and does not make use of them, because they prevent his self-dependence, his independence of all that is outside of himself." This saying is closely allied to Friedrich Schlegel's observation, "that a really philosophic human being should be able to tune himself at will in the philosophical or philological, the critical or poetical, the historical or rhetorical, the ancient or modern key, as one tunes an instrument, and this at any time and to any pitch."

According to the Romantic doctrine, the artistic omnipotence of the Ego and the arbitrariness of the poet can submit to no law. In this idea lies the germ of the notorious Romantic irony in art, the treating of everything as both jest and earnest, the eternal self-parody, the disturbing play with illusions alternately summoned up and banished, which destroys all directness of effect in many of the favourite works of the Romanticists.

The Romanticist's theory of art and life thus owes its existence to a mingling of poetry with philosophy, a coupling of the poet's dreams with the student's theories ; it is a production of purely intellectual powers, not of any relation between these powers and real life. Hence the excessively intellectual character of Romanticism. Hence all the self-duplication, all the raising to higher powers, in this poetry about poetry and this philosophising on philosophy. Hence its living and moving in a higher world, a different nature. This too is the explanation of all the symbolism

and allegory in these half-poetical, half-philosophical works. A literature came into being which partook of the character of a religion, and ultimately joined issue with religion, and which owed its existence rather to a life of emotion than a life of intellectual productiveness. Hence we understand how, as A. W. Schlegel himself says, "it was often rather the ethereal melody of the feelings that was lightly suggested than the feelings themselves that were expressed in all their strength and fulness." It was not the thing itself that the author wished to communicate to the reader, but a suggestion of the thing. It is not in bright sunlight, but in twilight or mysterious quivering moonlight, on a far horizon or in dreams, that we behold the figures of Romanticism. Hence too the Romantic dilution or diminution of the terms expressing what is perceived by the senses (Blitzeln, Aeugeln, Hinschatten), and also that interchange of the terms for the impressions of the different senses, which makes the imagery confusedly vague. In *Zerbino* Tieck writes of flowers:

> "Die Farbe klingt; die Form ertönt, jedwede
> Hat nach der Form und Farbe Zung' und Rede.
> . . . . . .
> Sich Farbe, Duft, Gesang Geschwister nennen."[1]

The essential element in this literature is no longer the passion of the *Sturm und Drang* period, but the free play of fancy, an activity of the imagination which is neither restrained by the laws of reason nor by the relation of feeling to reality. The higher, poetic sequences of ideas now introduced declare war against the laws of thought, ridicule them as philistine. Their place is taken by caprices, conceits, and vagaries. Fancy determines to dispense with reality, but despised reality has its revenge in the unsubstantiality or anæmia of fancy; fancy defies reason, but in this defiance there is an awkward contradiction; it is conscious and premeditated—reason is to be expelled by reason. Seldom has any poetic school worked under such a weight

[1] "Their colours sing, their forms resound; each, according to its form and colour finds voice and speech. . . . Colour, fragrance, song, proclaim themselves one family."

of perpetual consciousness of its own character as did this. Conscious intention is the mark of its productions.

The intellectual inheritance to which the Romanticists succeeded was overpoweringly great. The School came into existence when literature stood at its zenith in Germany. This explains the early maturity of its members; their way was made ready for them. They assimilated in their youth an enormous amount of literary knowledge and of artistic technique, and thus started with an intellectual capital such as no other young generation in Germany had ever possessed. They clothed their first thoughts in the language of Goethe, Schiller, and Shakespeare, and, beginning thus, proceeded to create what Goethe called "the period of forced talents." For the study of real human character and the execution of definite artistic ideas they substituted the high-handedness of turbulent fancy. Common to all the very dissimilar endeavours and productions of the Romanticists—to Wackenroder's *Klosterbruder*, with its spiritual enthusiasm for art and ideal beauty, to *Lucinde*, with its sensual worship of the flesh, to Tieck's melancholy romances and tales, in which capricious fate makes sport of man, and to Tieck's dramas and Hoffmann's stories, in which all form is lost and its place supplied by the caprices and arabesques of whimsical fancy—common to them all, is that law-defying self-assertion or assertion of the absolutism of the individual, which is a result of war with narrowing prose, of the urgent demand for poetry and freedom.

The absolute independence of the Ego isolates. Nevertheless these men soon founded a school, and after its speedy disintegration several interesting groups were formed. This is to be ascribed to their determination to make common cause in procuring the victory, insuring the universal dominion, of the philosophy of life which had been evolved by the great minds of Germany. They desired to introduce this philosophy of the geniuses into life itself, to give it expression in criticism, in poetry, in art theories, in religious exhortation, in the solution of social, and even of political problems; and their first step towards this was violent literary warfare. They were impelled partly by

the necessity felt by great and strong natures to impart one will and one mind to a whole band of fellow-combatants, and partly by the inclination of men of talent, whose talent is attacked and contested, to confront the overwhelming numbers of their opponents with a small but superior force. In the case of the best men, the formation of a school or a party was the result of exactly that lack of state organisation which was the first condition of their isolating independence. The consciousness of belonging to a people without unity as a nation, and without collective strength, begot the endeavour to imbue the leading spirits of the aristocracy of intellect with a new rallying principle.

II

HÖLDERLIN

OUTSIDE the group which represents the transition from the Hellenism of Goethe and Schiller to Romanticism stands a solitary figure, that of Hölderlin, one of the noblest and most refined intellects of the day. Although their contemporary, he was a pioneer of the German Romanticists, in much the same way as André Chénier, another Hellenist, was a pioneer of French Romanticism. He was educated with the future philosopher of the Romantic School, Schelling, and with Hegel, the great thinker, who came after Romanticism, and he was the friend of both of these, but had made acquaintance with none of the Romanticists proper when insanity put an end to his intellectual activity.

Hölderlin was born in 1770, and became insane in 1802. Hence, although he survived himself forty years, his life as an author is very little longer than Hardenberg's or Wackenroder's.

That enmity to Hellenism, which to posterity appears one of the chief characteristics of the Romantic movement, was not one of its original elements. On the contrary, with the exception of Tieck, who certainly had no appreciation of the Hellenic spirit, all the early Romanticists, but more especially the Schlegel brothers, Schleiermacher, and Schelling, were enthusiastic admirers of ancient Greece. It was their desire to enter into every feeling of humanity, and it was among the Greeks that they at first found humanity in all its fulness. They longed to break down the artificial social barriers of their time and escape to nature, and at first they found nature among the Greeks alone. To them the genuinely human was at the same time the genuinely Greek. Friedrich Schlegel, for example, embarks on his

career with the hope of being for literature all that Winckelmann has been for art. In his essays "On Diotima" and "On the Study of Greek Poetry," he proclaims the superiority of Greek culture and Greek poetry to all other. There is an indication of the later Schlegel in the attempt made to combat the false modesty of modern times, and to prove that beauty is independent of moral laws, which in no way concern art. Characteristic also is his demonstration of Aristotle's lack of appreciation of the Greek *Naturpoesie*.

A similar but more enduring enthusiasm for ancient Greece was the very essence of Hölderlin's being; and this enthusiasm did not find its expression in studies and essays, but took lyric form, in prose as well as verse. Even as dramatist and novelist, Hölderlin was the gifted lyric poet, that and nothing else. Haym has aptly observed of his romances: "Joy in the ideal, the collapse of the ideal, and grief over that collapse, constitute the theme which the Letters of Hyperion develop with a force which never weakens and a fervour which is always alike intense. . . . It is the irretrievable that is the cause of his suffering." And since the ideal was embodied for him in Greek life, such as he dreamed it to have been, his whole literary production is one longing lament over lost Hellas. Nothing could be less Greek or more Romantic than this longing; it is of exactly the same exaggerated character as Schack Staffeldt's enthusiasm for ancient Scandinavia and Wackenroder's devotion to German antiquity. Hölderlin's landscapes are as un-Greek as his modern Greeks in *Hyperion*, who are noble German enthusiasts, strongly influenced by Schiller. We cannot doubt that he was aware of this himself. But the lot of the solitary chosen spirits in Germany seemed to him a terrible one. Although he shows himself in his poems to be an ardent patriot, and although he sings the charms of romantic Heidelberg in antique strophes, yet Germany and Greece to him represent barbarism and culture. Concerning his own position to the Greeks he writes to his brother: "In spite of all my good-will, I too, in all that I do and think, merely stumble along in the track of these unique beings; and am often the more

awkward and foolish in deed and word because, like the geese, I stand flat-footed in the water of modernity, impotently endeavouring to wing my flight upward towards the Greek heaven." And at the close of *Hyperion* he says of the Germans: "They have been barbarians from time immemorial, and industry, science, even religion itself, has only made them still more barbarous, incapable of every divine feeling, too utterly depraved to enjoy the happiness conferred by the Graces. With their extravagances and their pettinesses, they are insupportable to every rightly constituted mind, dead and discordant as the fragments of a broken vase." Of German poets and artists he writes, that they present a distressing spectacle. "They live in the world like strangers in their own house . . . they grow up full of love and life and hope, and twenty years later one sees them wandering about like shadows, silent and cold."

Therefore Hölderlin rejoices over the victories of the French, over the "gigantic strides of the Republic," scoffs at all "the petty trickeries of political and ecclesiastical Würtemberg and Germany and Europe," derides the "narrow-minded domesticity" of the Germans, and bewails their lack of any feeling of common honour and common property. "I cannot," he exclaims, "imagine a people more torn asunder than are the Germans. You see artisans, but not men, philosophers, but not men, priests, but not men, servants and masters, young and old, but not men."

The conception of the State which we find in *Hyperion* is also quite in harmony with the spirit of the age, and quite un-Hellenic. "The State dare not demand what it cannot take by force. But what love and intellect give cannot be taken by force. It must keep its hands off that, else we will take its laws and pillory them! Good God! They who would make the State a school of morals do not know what a crime they are committing. The State has always become a hell when man has tried to make it his heaven."

Utterly un-Greek, wholly Romantic, is the love which Hyperion cherishes for his Diotima. It is the same deep and tragic feeling which bound Hölderlin, the poor tutor, to the mother of his pupils, Frau Susette Gontard, and

determined his fate. No Greek ever spoke of the woman he loved with the religious adoration which Hölderlin expresses for his "fair Grecian." "Dear friend, there is a being upon this earth in whom my spirit can and will repose for untold centuries, and then still feel how puerile, face to face with nature, all our thought and understanding is." And exactly the same Romantic, Petrarchian note is struck by Hyperion when he speaks of Diotima. Diotima is "the one thing desired by Hyperion's soul, the perfection which we imagine to exist beyond the stars." She is beauty itself, the incarnation of the ideal. Love is to him religion, and his religion is love of beauty. Beauty is the highest, the absolute ideal; it belongs, as a conception, to the world of reason, and as a symbol, to the world of imagination. From his æsthetic point of view, Hölderlin does not perceive that boundary line drawn by Kant between the domains of reason and imagination. His theory, a species of poetic-philosophic ecstasy, having points in common with both Schiller's Hellenism and Schelling's transcendental idealism, is Romantic before the days of Romanticism.

Germinating Romanticism is also to be traced in the gleam of Christian feeling which tinges his half-modern pantheism. He had been originally destined for the Church, and had suffered much from the severe discipline of the monastery where he was educated. In spite, however, of the many evidences of a pious disposition which we find in his letters, he was a pagan in his poems. He disliked priests, and steadily withstood his family's desire that he should become one. In his *Empedokles* we come upon the following significant reply of the hero to the priest Hermokrates:—

"Du weisst es ja, ich hab es dir bedeutet,
Ich kenne dich und deine schlimme Zunft.
Und lange war's ein Räthsel mir, wie euch
In ihrem Runde duldet die Natur.
Ach, als ich noch ein Knabe war, da mied
Euch Allverderber schon mein frommes Herz,
Das unbestechbar, innig liebend hing
An Sonn' und Aether und den Boten allen
Der grossen ferngeahndeten Natur;
Denn wohl hab ich's gefühlt in meiner Furcht,

Dass ihr des Herzens freie Götterliebe
Bereden möchtet zu gemeinem Dienst,
Und dass ich's treiben sollte so, wie ihr.
Hinweg ! ich kann vor mir den Mann nicht sehn,
Der Göttliches wie ein Gewerbe treibt,
Sein Angesicht ist falsch und kalt und todt,
Wie seine Götter sind." [1]

There is not a trace in Hölderlin of the sanctimonious piety developed by the other Romanticists, who, to begin with, were far more decided free-thinkers than he. Yet his Hellenism is not pagan in the manner of Schiller's and Goethe's. There is a fervency in it which is akin to Christian devotion ; his poetic prayers to the sun, the earth, and the air are those of a believer ; and when, as in *Empedokles*, he handles a purely pagan subject, the spirit of the treatment is such that we feel (as we do in a later work, Kleist's *Amphitryon*) the Christian legend behind the heathen. The position of Empedokles to the Pharisees of his day and country is exactly that of Jesus to the Pharisees of Judea. Empedokles, like Jesus, is the great prophet, and both his willing sacrificial death and the worship of which he is the object awake feelings which remotely resemble those of the devout Christian.

In Hölderlin we find in outline, light and delicate as if traced by a spirit, symbols and emotions which the Romantic School develops, exaggerates, caricatures, or simply obliterates.

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[1] "'Tis nothing new ; this I have told you oft ;
I know you well, you and your evil kind.
And long it was a mystery to me
How Nature could endure you in her realm.
Corrupters of mankind ! Even as a child,
My guileless heart shrank from you with distrust—
That honest, fervent heart, that loved the sun,
The cool fresh air, and all the messengers
Of Nature, dimly discerned and great.
For even then I timidly perceived
How ye would take our true love of the gods
And make it serve some baser, selfish end—
And that in this ye would that I should follow you.
Begone ! I cannot look upon the man
Who practises religion as a trade ;
His countenance is false and cold and dead,
As are his gods."

III

A. W. SCHLEGEL

In 1797, August Wilhelm Schlegel, then aged thirty, published the first volume of his translation of Shakespeare. Rough drafts of several of the plays in this edition have been found, and these faded, dusty manuscripts not only enable us to follow the persevering, talented translator in his self-imposed task, but, when carefully read, give us direct insight into his and his wife's spiritual life, and indeed into the intellectual life of the whole period.[1]

Even apparently insignificant details are suggestive. The manuscripts are not always in A. W. Schlegel's handwriting. He set to work upon *Romeo and Juliet* in the winter of 1795–96; in 1796 he married Caroline Böhmer; and we have a complete copy of the first rough draft of the play in Caroline's handwriting, with corrections in Schlegel's. In September 1797, as her letters show, she copied *As You Like It* from an almost illegible manuscript. And she was more than a mere copyist. She collaborated with Schlegel in his essay on *Romeo and Juliet*, which ranks next to Goethe's disquisitions on *Hamlet* in *Wilhelm Meister* as the best Shakespeare criticism produced in Germany up to that time. We recognise her now and again in some outburst of womanly feeling, or in a greater freedom of style than we are accustomed to in Schlegel. She had a far truer understanding than her contemporaries of the full significance of a work, the aim of which was the incorporation of Shakespeare in his unalloyed entirety into German literature. But her interest in the work and the labourer did not, as the manuscripts show us, survive the first year of her married life. At first it is her handwriting which predominates, and,

[1] M. Bernays: *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Schlegelschen Shakespeare.*

though it is less frequently to be seen alongside of her husband's in the manuscripts of those plays with which he was occupied during the years 1797–98, her collaboration is still apparent. We find the last traces of her pen in the manuscript of the *Merchant of Venice*, which dates from the autumn of 1798. In October of that year, Schelling joined the Romanticist circle in Jena. Thenceforward no more of Caroline's handwriting is discoverable.

Among the manuscripts in question, two give us a very distinct idea of the progress of Schlegel's intellectual development. They are two different texts of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Before A. W. Schlegel's time no one in Germany, or elsewhere, had attempted to translate Shakespeare line for line. The two tame prose translations by Wieland and Eschenburg were, in fact, all that existed. As a student in Göttingen, Schlegel made the first attempt to reproduce in German verse parts of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. From childhood he had been "an indefatigable verse-maker." His talent was obviously inherited. Half a century before he and his brother made their appearance, two brothers Schlegel had made a name for themselves in literature—Johann Elias, who lived for many years in Copenhagen, was a friend of Holberg, and, in everything connected with the stage, a forerunner of Lessing, and Johann Adolph, father of August Wilhelm and Friedrich, who, without much originality, possessed decided linguistic and plastic talent.

As a young student, August Wilhelm, already distinguished by his impressionableness as a stylist and opinionativeness as an author, ardently desired to make the acquaintance of Bürger, who was leading a lonely and unhappy life as professor at the University of Göttingen. Bürger's fame as a poet procured him no consideration in a place where learning alone was valued; his social position had, moreover, been injured by the discovery of his relations with his wife's sister. With the feelings of an exile, he warmly welcomed the distinguished and talented young disciple, whose taste was more correct and whose stores of knowledge were better ordered than his own. At this time Bürger was still con-

sidered to be Germany's best lyric poet and most accomplished versifier. Schlegel placed himself under his tuition, and learned all his linguistic and metrical devices, all the methods of producing artistic effects by careful choice and arrangement of words and use of rhythm and metres. With his natural gift of imitation, he appropriated as many of Bürger's characteristics as were at all compatible with his entirely different temperament. His poem *Ariadne* might have been written by Bürger. Bürger had been particularly successful in the sonnet, a form of poetry which had lately come into vogue in Germany. So closely did the pupil follow in the footsteps of his master, that when, many years later, a complete edition of Schlegel's works was published, two of Bürger's sonnets were accidentally included among them.

The master did homage to his remarkably promising pupil in a fine sonnet, beginning :—

> "Junger Aar, dein königlicher Flug
> Wird den Druck der Wolken überwinden,
> Wird die Bahn zum Sonnentempel finden,
> Oder Phöbus' Wort in mir ist Lug,"[1]

and ending with the charmingly modest lines :—

> "Dich zum Dienst des Sonnengotts zu krönen
> Hielt ich nicht den eignen Kranz zu wert,
> Doch—dir ist ein besserer beschert."[2]

Schlegel responded with a criticism of Bürger's frigidly grand *Das hohe Lied von der Einzigen*, which he praises as a magnificent epic. In collaboration with Bürger he now began a translation of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, of which he did the greater part, Bürger merely revising. He was still completely under his master's influence ; the manuscripts show that he always accepted Bürger's corrections and deferred to his predilection for sonority and vigour. As

[1] "In thy kingly flight, young eagle, thou wilt pierce the thickness of the clouds, and find the way to the temple of the sun-god—else his word, spoken through me, is false."

[2] "I held not my own wreath too precious to crown thee with it to the service of Apollo ; but—a better is thy destiny."

a translator, Bürger took no pains to reproduce Shakespeare's peculiarities as closely as possible; he only manifested his own peculiarities, by making all the coarse, wanton speeches, and the passages in which misguided passions run riot, as prominent as possible; he emphasised and exaggerated everything that appealed to his own liking for a coarse jest, and destroyed the magic of the light and tender passages. In spite of his own great and natural love of refinement, young Schlegel strove in this matter also to follow in his master's steps, with the result that he was not infrequently coarse and awkward where he meant to be natural and vigorous.

A better guide would have been Herder, who, long before this, in the fragments of Shakespeare plays in his *Stimmen der Völker*, had given an example of the right method of translating from English into German. If Schlegel had taken lessons from Herder in Shakespeare-translating, he would never have rendered five-footed iambics by Alexandrines, nor changed the metre of the fairy-songs. No one had realised the inadequacy of Wieland's translation more clearly than Herder. And now the spirit in which the latter aimed at Germanising Shakespeare descended upon Schlegel, who, in spite of the faults of his first attempts, soon surpassed Herder himself.

He was not long in shaking himself free from Bürger's influence. To Bürger the highest function of art was to be national and popular. In 1791, Schlegel, now no longer in Bürger's vicinity, but a tutor in Amsterdam, devoted much attention to the works of Schiller. His poetical attempts were henceforth more in the style of that master; he wrote a sympathetic criticism of *Die Künstler;* and he was led to a higher conception of art by the perusal of Schiller's æsthetic writings. His metrical style began to acquire greater dignity. But Schiller was almost as incapable as Bürger of developing in Schlegel a true and full understanding of Shakespeare—Schiller, who, in his translation of *Macbeth*, had transformed the witches into Greek Furies, and changed the Porter's coarsely jovial monologue into an edifying song. If Bürger's realism was one danger, Schiller's pomposity was another.

But at the same time that Schiller enlightened Schlegel as to the high significance of art, the newly-published Collected Works of Goethe, whom he only now began to appreciate, stimulated his natural inclination to study, interpret, and make poetical translations. As already mentioned, this first edition of Goethe's collected works met with but a poor reception. The chief reason of this was that the public, understanding nothing of the poet's mental development, had expected new works in the style of *Werther* or *Götz*. But to Schlegel's critical intellect, Goethe's wonderful many-sidedness was now revealed. He understood and appreciated the artist's capacity of forgetting himself for the moment, of surrendering himself entirely to the influence of his subject, which in Goethe's case produced forms that were never arbitrarily chosen, but invariably demanded by the theme. He understood that he himself, as a poetical translator, must practise the same self-abnegation and develop a similar capacity of intellectual re-creation. Two things were required of the translator, a feminine susceptibility to the subtlest characteristics of the foreign original, and masculine capacity to re-create with the impression of the whole in his mind ; and both of these requirements were to be found in Goethe ; for his nature was multiplicity, his name " Legion," his spirit Protean.

There still remained the technical, linguistic difficulties to overcome ; and in this, above all, Goethe was an epoch-making model. He had remoulded the German language. In passing through his hands it had gained so greatly in pliability and compass, had acquired such wealth of expression both in the grand and the graceful style, that it offered Schlegel exactly the well-tuned instrument of which he stood in need. While under Bürger's influence he had looked upon technical perfection as a purely external quality, which could be acquired by indefatigable polishing ; he now realised that perfect technique has an inward origin, that it is in reality the unity of style which is conditioned by the general cast of a mind. And he began to see that his life task was a double one, namely, to reproduce the masterpieces of foreign races in the German language, and to interpret

critically for his countrymen the best literary productions both of Germany and other lands.

Now, too, Schlegel acquired a quite new understanding of Fichte, the friend and brother-in-arms whom the Romanticists had so quickly won for their cause. He realised that Fichte's doctrine of the Ego contained in extremely abstract terms the idea of the unlimited capacity of the human mind to find itself in everything and to find everything in itself. Round this powerful fundamental thought of Fichte's, August Wilhelm's pliable mind twined itself.

At this time he was much influenced by the correspondence which he kept up regularly with his younger brother. Friedrich had been drawn by August Wilhelm into the stream of the new literary movement, and his militant disposition made him the most reckless champion of the new principles as soon as he felt assured of their truth. The brothers had very different characters. The elder, in spite of the audacity of his literary views, had the better regulated mind. He had early developed a sense of form and of beauty. His chief gift was a capacity for moulding language; and accuracy, dexterity, and the sense of proportion were qualities he was born with. Except in cases of strong provocation, he showed moderation in scientific and artistic controversy; he knew comparatively early what he desired and what he was capable of; and his determination and perseverance made him a successful pioneer of the ideas and principles of which he had chosen to make himself the spokesman. He became the founder of the Romantic School, an achievement for which he possessed every qualification—this man whom his brother jestingly called "the divine schoolmaster" or "the schoolmaster of the universe."

Friedrich Schlegel was the more restless spirit, the genuine sect-founder. He himself tells us, in one of his letters, that it was his life-long desire "not only to preach and dispute like Luther, but also, like Mohammed, to subjugate the spiritual realms of the earth with the flaming sword of the word." He did not lack initiative, and abounded in plans so colossal that there was a jarring disproportion between them and his ability to carry them out. Eternally wavering, without tena-

city or fundamental conviction, fragmentary in the extreme, but rich in both suggestive and disconcerting ideas and in witty conceits, he was constantly beset by the temptation to silence his opponents with mysterious terminology, and constantly liable to relapse into platitudes and meaningless verbiage. What Novalis once wrote to him was more correct than any one suspected: "The King of Thule, dear Schlegel, was your progenitor; you are related to ruin." As a critic, he was more impulsive and less impartial than August Wilhelm; as a poet, he was only once or twice in his life genuinely natural, and in his *Alarkos* he plunged into an abyss of bathos into which his brother, with his more correct taste, could never have fallen. The elder brother had started the younger in his literary career; the younger now drove the elder onward, and in the process put an end, by his unamiability, to the latter's friendly relations with Schiller, and, ultimately, even to his valued and long maintained friendship with Goethe.

August Wilhelm now put his translation of Shakespeare aside for a time, and turned his attention to the poets of the South. He experimented in all directions, translated fragments of Homer, of the Greek elegiac, lyric, dramatic, and idyllic poets, of almost all the Latin poets and many of the Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. At a later period he even translated Indian poetry, his aim being to make the German language a Pantheon for the divine in every tongue. He lingered longest over Dante, although he did not possess the mastery of form required to render the *terza rima;* he rhymed only two lines of each triplet, thus altering the character of the verse and doing away with the intertwining of the stanzas.

After this he turned to *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, sending fragments of his translations to Friedrich, who showed them to Caroline. Her judgment was favourable on the whole, but she found fault with the style as being rather antiquated; this she ascribed to Wilhelm's having been lately employed in translating Dante, his ear having thereby become accustomed to obsolete words and expressions. The fact was, that shortly before this he had

awakened to the necessity of being on his guard against the elaborate polish which he had made his aim after giving up Bürger's style; he now fell into the other extreme, became archaic, rugged, and hard.

In 1797 Schlegel sent the first samples of *Romeo and Juliet* to Schiller. They were printed in *Die Horen;* and in the same periodical there presently also appeared his essay, *Etwas über William Shakespeare bei Gelegenheit Wilhelm Meisters*. In *Wilhelm Meister* Goethe had proclaimed the endeavour to understand Shakespeare to be an important element in German culture. In its conversations on *Hamlet* he had refuted the foolish theory that the great dramatist was an uncultivated natural genius, destitute of artistic consciousness. Had such been the case, the exact reproduction of his style would not have been a matter of vital importance in a German translation. But with so great an artist as the Shakespeare presented to us in *Wilhelm Meister*, it was plain that the harmony between subject and form must not be deranged. And yet even Goethe himself had, without any feeling of unsuitability, given his quotations from *Hamlet* in the old prose translation; even he had not realised how inseparably matter and manner are connected.

Slowly and laboriously Schlegel progresses. His judgment is still so defective that he fancies it impossible to dispense with Alexandrines; in *Romeo and Juliet*, he retains the five-footed iambics only "as far as possible"; the scene between Romeo and Friar Laurence he renders in Alexandrines, excusing himself with the remark that this metre is less detrimental in speeches garnished with maxims and descriptions than in the dialogue proper of the drama. The result is the loss of Romeo's lyric fervour.

He feels this himself, and with iron industry and determined enthusiasm sets to work again, rejects the Alexandrines, and compels himself, in spite of the verbosity of the German language, to say in ten or eleven syllables what he had said before in twelve or thirteen. For long it appears to him an impossible task to reproduce each line by one line. The translation swells in his hands as it did in Bürger's.

Fourteen English lines become nineteen or twenty German. It seems to him that it is impossible to do with less; until at last he gains true insight, and sees, from the very foundation, how Shakespeare raises the edifice of his art. Now he renounces all amplitude and all redundancy that is not in Shakespeare. Each line is rendered by a single line. He curses and bewails the prolixity and inadequacy of German: his language has such different limits, such different turns of expression from the English language; he cannot reproduce Shakespeare's style; what he produces is a stammer, a stutter, without resonance or fire—but he coerces himself, he coerces the language, and produces his translation.

There is no great exaggeration in Scherer's dictum: "Schlegel's Shakespeare takes its place beside the works given to the world by Goethe and Schiller during the period when they worked in fellowship; there is the inevitable distance between reproductive and productive art, but there is the nearness of the perfect to the perfect."

Having acquired complete mastery of the style, Schlegel now began to reap the fruits of his labour. He, the master, opened his hand, and between the years 1797 and 1801 let fall from it into the lap of the German people sixteen of Shakespeare's dramas, which, in spite of occasional tameness or constraint of style, might, in their new form, have been the work of a German poet of Shakespeare's rank.

Let us consider what this really means. It means not much less than that Shakespeare, as well as Schiller and Goethe, saw the light in Germany in the middle of last century. He was born in England in 1564; he was born again, in his German translator, in 1767. *Romeo and Juliet* was published in London in 1597; it reappeared in Berlin as a new work in 1797.

When Shakespeare thus returned to life in Germany, he acted with full force upon a public which was in several ways more capable of understanding him than his original public, though it was spiritually less akin to him and though they were not the battles of its day which he fought. He now began to feed the millions who did not understand English with his spiritual bread. Not until now did Central

and Northern Europe discover him. Not until now did the whole Germanic-Gothic world become his public.

But we have also seen how much went to the production of an apparently unpretending literary work of this high rank. In its rough drafts and manuscripts we may read great part of the intellectual history of a whole generation. Before it could come into existence nothing less was required than that Lessing's criticism and Wieland's and Eschenburg's attempts should prepare the soil, and that a genius like Herder should concentrate in himself all the receptivity and ingenuity of surmise belonging to the German mind, and should, with the imperiousness characteristic of him, oblige young Goethe to become his disciple. But Goethe in his prose *Götz* only imitated a prose Shakespeare. There had to be born a man with the unique talent of A. W. Schlegel, and he, with his hereditary linguistic and stylistic ability, had to be placed in a position to acquire the greatest technical perfection of the period. Then he had to free himself, by the influence of Schiller's noble conception of art, from the tendency to coarseness which was the result of Bürger's influence, and at the same time to steer clear of Schiller's tendency to pomposity and dislike of wanton joviality, had to gain a complete understanding of Goethe, to enter into possession, as it were, of the language which Goethe had developed, and to attain to an even clearer conviction than his of the essentiality of the harmony of subject and style in Shakespeare. It was necessary, too, that he should be stimulated by the ardour of a kindred talent and assisted by the keen criticism of a woman. Hundreds of sources had to flow into each other, hundreds of circumstances to coincide, of people to make each other's acquaintance, of minds to meet and fertilise each other, before this work, in its modest perfection, could be given to the world ; a small thing, the translation of a poet who had been dead for two hundred years, it yet provided the most precious spiritual nourishment for millions, and exercised a deep and lasting influence on German poetry.

IV

TIECK AND JEAN PAUL

An apprehensive disposition, predisposing to hallucinations, congenital melancholy, at times verging on insanity, a clear, sober judgment, ever inclined to uphold the claims of reason, and a very unusual capacity for living in and producing emotional moods—such were the principal characteristics of Ludwig Tieck. He was the most productive author of the Romantic School, and, after its disruption, he wrote a long series of excellent novels, depicting past and present more realistically than Romantic writers were in the habit of doing.

The son of a ropemaker, he was born in Berlin in 1773. Even as a school-boy he was profoundly influenced by classic writers like Goethe, Shakespeare, and Holberg. He early succeeded in imitating both Shakespeare's elfin songs and Ossian's melodious sadness; but during one period of his youth he weakly allowed himself to be exploited by elder men of letters, at whose instigation he produced quantities of carelessly written, unwholesome literature. Though the spirit and tendency of his writings were prescribed for him, his characteristic qualities are, nevertheless, discernible even in these valueless early works. Under the direction of his teacher, Rambach, he wrote, or re-modelled in the spirit of the "enlightenment" period, sentimental tales of noble brigands, and invented gruesome episodes in the style of the death-scene of Franz Moor. But now and again, in some ironical aside, we get a glimpse of his own more advanced ideas.

A little later we find the future Romanticist writing precocious stories for the almanacs published by Nicolai, that old firebrand of the "enlightenment" period—stories in which

superstition is held up to ridicule, and in which we only very occasionally come upon a touch of irony, such as the selection of a particularly inane old man to express contempt for "the stupid Middle Ages" and "Shakespeare's ghosts." No doubt Tieck wrote these compositions principally because he had sold his pen; still they none the less betray the weariness of the desponder, who is so exhausted by his long struggle with questions and doubts of every kind, that he can, without any great reluctance, side with those who depreciate genius and sing the praises of the sensible, bourgeois golden mean. His unsettled mental condition is shown no less clearly in his rationalistic tales than in the supernaturalism, the voluptuous cruelty, and the cold cynicism of the novels and plays dating from the beginning of the Nineties, in which he seems to give us more of himself.

Tieck's first work of any importance is *William Lovell*. The first part of this novel, which he wrote at the age of twenty, appeared in 1795. In it, when treating of art, he already occasionally touched the strings upon which the Romantic School subsequently played.

William Lovell goes to Paris (which Tieck at that time had not seen), and is, of course, disgusted with everything there. "The town is a hideous, irregular pile of stones. One has the feeling of being in a great prison. . . . People chatter and talk all day long without so much as once saying what they think. . . . I occasionally went to the theatre, simply because time hung so heavily on my hands. The tragedies consist of epigrams, without action or passion, and tirades which produce much the same effect as the words issuing from the mouths of the figures in old drawings. . . . The less natural an actor is, the more highly is he esteemed. In the great, world-renowned Paris Opera—I fell asleep." Such are the impressions made upon Lovell (an Englishman) by Paris at the time of the Revolution. It is nothing but an expression of the prevalent German contempt for the French character and French art, doubly unreasonable in this case because it has simply been learned by rote out of books. In the Théâtre Français, however, Lovell ejaculates: "O

LUDWIG TIECK

Sophocles! O divine Shakespeare!" and he characteristically observes: "I hate the men who, with their little imitation sun (namely, reason), light up all the pleasant twilight corners and chase away the fascinating shadow phantoms which dwelt so securely under the leafy canopies. There is, undoubtedly, a kind of daylight in our times, but the night and morning light of romance were more beautiful than this grey light from a cloudy sky."

With the exception of a few such touches, this work seems at the first glance to be distinguished by none of the peculiarities one is accustomed to associate with a Romantic production; but, as a matter of fact, there is no book which reveals to us more distinctly the foundations on which the Romantic movement rests. The main idea and the form of *William Lovell* (it is written in letters) were both borrowed from a French novel, *Le Paysan Perverti*, by the materialistic writer, Rétif de la Brétonne. The fact that we are able to trace the origin of a Romantic work directly to French materialism is not without significance; it is in reality from this materialism that the Romanticists derive their gloomy fatalism. *Lovell* is an extremely tedious book to read now-a-days; the style is tiresomely diffuse, the characters are as if lost in mist. Some of the subordinate figures, the devoted old man-servant, for instance, are weak imitations of Richardson—there is not a trenchant trait nor a dramatic situation in the whole book. Its merit, which is as German as are its defects, lies in its psychology. The hero is a youth who is led, slowly and surely, to do away, as far as he himself is concerned, with all authority, to disregard every one of the traditional, accepted rules of life, until at last he is leading the life, not only of a confirmed egotist, but of a criminal.

It is a mistake to feel surprised that so young a man as Tieck could depict such a being. Is it not precisely at this early age, when his spiritual eyesight does not yet enable him to look abroad, that the youth is constantly occupied with all the strange things he sees when he looks into his own heart? Is it not then that he is impelled to unravel himself, to examine his own condition, to look at himself perpetually in the mirror held out to him by his own consciousness? With men of

a certain disposition there is no more self-critical age than twenty or thereabouts. There is still so much of life before one then, so much time to do one's work in ; one spends the days in learning to know the instrument upon which one is to play for the rest of one's life, in tuning it, or finding out how it is already tuned. The time is still distant when the mature man will seize upon that instrument, which is himself, and use it—as a violin or as a sledge-hammer, according to the requirements of the situation. And if surrounding circumstances offer neither tasks nor sustenance, and the Ego is obliged to go on living upon its own substance, the result will inevitably be the exhaustion, the demolition of the personality.

What is peculiarly characteristic of author, tendency, and period, is the sentimental extravagance to which this introspection leads. In all seriousness the individual dares to make his fortuitous Ego, which has disorganised everything that established custom requires men to respect, the standard of everything, the source of all laws. Here we have unmistakably a distortion of Fichte's fundamental idea. Read the following verses from *Lovell* and the succeeding reflection :—

" Willkommen, erhabenster Gedanke,
Der hoch zum Gotte mich erhebt.

Die Wesen sind, weil wir sie dachten,
In trüber Ferne liegt die Welt,
Es fällt in ihre dunkeln Schachten
Ein Schimmer, den wir mit uns brachten.
Warum sie nicht in wilde Trümmer fällt?
Wir sind das Schicksal, das sie aufrecht hält!

Den bangen Ketten froh entronnen
Geh' ich nun kühn durchs Leben hin,
Den harten Pflichten abgewonnen,
Von feigen Thoren nur ersonnen.
Die Tugend ist nur, weil ich selber bin,
Ein Wiederschein in meinem innern Sinn.

Was kümmern mich Gestalten, deren matten
Lichtglanz ich selbst hervorgebracht?
Mag Tugend sich und Laster gatten!
Sie sind nur Dunst und Nebelschatten,
Das Licht aus mir fällt in die finstre Nacht.
Die Tugend ist nur, weil ich sie gedacht."[1]

[1] " Welcome, sublime thought, that makes of me a god! Things are, because we have thought them.—In the dim distance lies the world; into its dark caverns falls

"My outer self thus rules the material, my inner self the spiritual world. Everything is subject to my will; I can call every phenomenon, every action what I please; the animate and the inanimate world are in leading-strings which are controlled by my mind; my whole life is only a dream, the many forms in which I mould according to my will. I myself am the only law in all nature, and everything obeys this law."

When Friedrich Schlegel exclaims, "Fichte is not a sufficiently absolute idealist . . . I and Hardenberg (Novalis) are more what idealists ought to be," we remember that ten years previously, and long before there was any talk of Romanticism and Romanticists, Tieck had perceived what were to be the characteristics of the new school, *i.e.* personal lawlessness, and the glorification of this lawlessness, under the name of imagination, as the source of life and art. Lovell is an extravagant personification of these characteristics. Kierkegaard's Johannes the Seducer, the most perfect and the last example of the type in Danish literature, always keeps within certain bounds; he evades ethical questions, looking upon morality as a tiresome, troublesome power, and never attacking it directly; but Lovell, the more many-sided, the more boldly planned, if less skilfully worked-out character, recoils neither from treachery, nor bloodshed, nor poison. He is one of this period's many variations of the Don Juan-Faust type, with a touch of Schiller's Franz Moor. Satiety of self-contemplation has, in his case, led to a boundless contempt for mankind, to a ruthless sweeping away of all illusions; the one and only consolation being that thus hypocrisy is unveiled and the ugly truth seen. There is a close analogy with much that the Romanticists subsequently wrote in such an

a ray of light, which we brought with us. Why does this world not fall into atoms? Because the power of our will holds it together!—Glad at heart because I have escaped from my chains, I now go boldly forward in the path of life, absolved from those irksome duties which were the invention of cowardly fools. Virtue is, because I am; it is but the reflection of my inner self.—What care I for forms which borrow their dim splendour from myself? Let virtue wed with vice! They are but shadows in the mist. The light that illumines the dark night comes from me. Virtue is, because I have thought it."

utterance as this: "Voluptuousness is undoubtedly the great mystery of our being; even the purest and most fervent love dives into this pool. . . . Only ruthlessness, only a clear perception of the illusion can save us; Amalie is, therefore, nothing to me, now that I see that poetry, art, and even love, are only draped and veiled sensuality. . . . Sensuality is the driving-wheel of the whole machinery . . . voluptuousness is the inspiration of music, of painting, of all the arts; all human desires flutter round this magnetic pole, like moths round a candle; . . . hence it is that Boccaccio and Ariosto are the greatest poets, and that Titian and the wanton Correggio stand high above Domenichino and pious Raphael. Even religious devotion I consider to be only a diverted course of that sensual instinct which is refracted in a thousand different colours." One would expect this Lovell, in whose meditations sensuality plays so great a part, to be represented as a man whose instincts lead him far astray. Not at all! He is as cold as ice, as cold as Kierkegaard's shadow of a seducer, whom he in this particular anticipates. He does not commit his excesses with his flesh and blood, but with his fantastically excited brain. He is a purely intellectual being, a North German of the purest water. And there is one particular in which he is, in anticipation, astonishingly Romantic. When he has, so to speak, burned himself out, when every spark of conviction is extinguished in his mind, and all his feelings lie "slain and dead" around him, he seeks refuge in the supernatural and places his trust in mystic revelations, of which an old impostor has held out the prospect. This trait, which, significantly enough, is not to be found in his French prototype, was necessary to complete the character.

The personality here is so hollow, weighs so light in its own estimation, that the impression it produces on itself is, that it is both real and unreal; it has become unfamiliar to itself, and has as little confidence in itself as in any exterior power. It stands outside its own experiences, and when it acts, feels as if it were playing a part. Lovell tells us how he seduced a young girl, Emily Burton: "I suddenly cast myself at her feet, and confessed that it was nothing but my

passionate love for her which had brought me to the castle ; I declared that this was to be my last attempt to learn if there were any human heart that would still come to my aid and reconcile me to life and fate. She was beautiful, and I acted my part with wonderful inspiration, exactly as if it were a congenial rôle in a play ; every word I said told ; I spoke with fire and yet without affectation." And later he remarks : "She has herself to reproach for any temporary loss of home happiness ; I am not to blame because, in accordance with conventional ideas, she is at present disgraced in the eyes of many. I played one part, she answered with another ; we acted the play of a very stupid writer with great seriousness, and now we regret having wasted our time." The whole was nothing but a scene from a play.

In this fictitious character there are already developed those qualities which we find later in real characters, such as Friedrich Schlegel and Gentz ; and in this one man's habit of mind we have all that, which, transferred to art, became the notorious irony of Romanticism. Here, in the character, is the undisguised egotism which looks upon life as a rôle ; there, in art, the misconception and exaggeration of Schiller's idea that artistic activity is "a game," a play, *i.e.* an activity without any outward aim—in short, the belief that true art is that which perpetually shatters its own edifice, renders illusion impossible, and ends, like Tieck's comedies, in self-parody. There is the very closest resemblance between the manner in which the hero acts and the manner in which the comedy is written. The irony is one and the same ; it may all be traced back to the same egotism and unreality.[1]

In order really to understand the psychological condition depicted in Lovell, we must not only see its ultimate consequences, but must also, as in the case of René, see how it originates and what conditions it. It is conditioned by the ferment of lawlessness distinctive of the period. Hence the most diverse creative minds co-operate in the production of the type. As a Titan of satiety, of *tædium vitæ*, Lovell is only one of a race of Titans.

[1] Tieck : *William Lovell*, i. 49, 52, 172, 178, 212 ; ii. 110.

Two years before *Lovell* was planned, Jean Paul, who was ten years older than Tieck and four years younger than Schiller, began a description of this race in his so-called "Faustiade," the novel *Titan*. Jean Paul is in many ways the forerunner of Romanticism; in the Romantic School Hoffmann recalls him to us, as Tieck recalls Goethe. He is a thorough Romanticist in the absolute arbitrariness with which, as an artist, he sets to work. As Auerbach says, he has "in readiness studies of men, moods, traits of character, psychological complications, and miscellaneous imagery, which he introduces at random, adjusting them to given characters or situations." He thrusts all kinds of irrelevant matter into the elastic framework of his story. He is, further, a Romanticist in his absorption in self—for it is himself, always himself, who speaks by the mouth of his characters, whatever they may be; in the famous humour which with him lords it over all else, respecting none of the conventions of style; and, finally, in the fact that he is the antipodes of classical culture. But, whatever he may have been in art, in life he was not the defender of lawlessness, but the ardent champion of liberty, Fichte's equal in enthusiastic persistence. He was neither the foe of enlightenment, nor of reason, nor of the Reformation, nor of the Revolution; he was convinced of the historical value and the full validity of the ideas which it is the glory of the eighteenth century to have produced and championed. Therefore he uplifted a warning voice against the futile, demoralising fantasticality of the Romanticists.

Titan contains the most powerful of Jean Paul's ideal characters, Roquairol. His strength did not lie in the delineation of ideal characters; he was first and foremost the admirable, realistic idyll-writer.

Roquairol is a prototype of the form in which the age moulded its passion and its despair. He is burning, conscious desire, which develops into fantastic eccentricity, because circumstances have no use for it, and because it does not possess the power to take hold of reality, re-mould it and subject it to itself; it becomes a disease, which strikes inwards and leads to morbid self-contemplation and

suicide. Roquairol describes himself in a letter (*Titan*, iii. *Zykel*, 88):—

"Look at me when I take off my mask! My face twitches convulsively, like the face of a man who has taken poison. I have indeed taken poison; I have swallowed the great poison ball, the ball called Earth. . . . I am like a hollow tree, charred by a *fantastic fire*. When the worms in the intestines of the Ego—anger, ecstasy, love, and the like—begin to crawl about in me and devour each other, I look down upon them from the height of my Ego, I cut them in pieces as if they were polypi and fasten them into each other. Then I look on at myself looking on. This repeats itself *ad infinitum*. What is the use of it all? Mine is not the usual idealism, the idealism of faith; mine is *an idealism of the heart*, peculiar to those who have often experienced all the emotions, on the stage, on paper, or in real life. But of what good is it? . . . I often look upon the mountains and the rivers and the ground round about me, and feel as if at any moment they might dissolve and disappear, and I with them. . . . There is in man a callous, bold spirit, which asserts its independence of everything, even of virtue. Man chooses virtue if he will; he is its creator, not its creature. I once experienced a storm at sea, when the raging, foaming waters lashed themselves into great crested billows, while from a calm sky the sun serenely looked on. So be it with you! The heart is the storm, the sky the Ego! . . . Do you believe that the authors of tragedies and novels, or at any rate the geniuses among them, who a thousand times over have aped everything human and divine, are different from me? What really sustains them and the others is their hunger for money and renown. . . . The apes are the geniuses amongst the beasts, and geniuses are apes in their æsthetic mimicry, in heartlessness, malignity, sensuality, and—gaiety."

He relates how an inclination which was simply the result of ennui had led him to seduce his friend's sister. "I lost nothing; in me there is no innocence. I gained nothing, for I hate sensual pleasure. The broad black shadow which some call remorse quickly blotted out the

fleeting bright picture of the magic-lantern ; but is the black worse for the eyes than the bright ?"

He who reflects carefully upon even these short extracts from Jean Paul's huge four-volume novel will see how here again a connecting line is drawn between life and art. Without premeditation, but very significantly, Roquairol takes the nature of the productive artist as an image of his own, and the expressions "charred by fantastic fire" and "the idealism of the heart" are as accurate as scientific definitions. There was no doubt in the author's mind as to what it was he wished to delineate. Roquairol, after committing his last and most abominable crime, namely, visiting Linda by night, disguised as his friend and her lover, Albano, is made to die by his own hand on the stage. He is playing a part which ends in suicide, and he shoots himself dead. He lives to the last moment in a world of appearances and make-believe, confusing or blending the real with the imaginary. And this determination to make reality fantastic or poetical is the distinguishing feature of the succeeding generation, the task to which it set itself, the problem which all its productions were attempts to solve. To understand this is to understand and excuse the blunders it makes in its schemes for the remoulding of reality, such a scheme, for instance, as we find in Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*.

The great question of the relation of poetry to life, despair over the deep, bitter discord between them, the unwearied struggle to bring about a reconciliation—this is what lies at the foundation of the whole of German literature from the *Sturm und Drang* period to the death of Romanticism. In order, therefore, to understand *Lucinde*, as well as *Lovell*, it is necessary to look back. We understand both better by the help of Jean Paul's *Titan*. Lovell's predecessor is the Titan Roquairol, Lucinde's the Titaness Linda.

V

SOCIAL ENDEAVOURS OF THE ROMANTICISTS: LUCINDE

At the University of Jena, in June 1801, a young candidate for the degree of doctor stood on the rostrum delivering his thesis. Everything possible was done to put him out and annoy him; the unprecedented step was taken of providing opponents. One of these, a somewhat inept young man, desiring to distinguish himself, began: "*In tractatu tuo erotico Lucinda dixisti,*" &c., &c. To this the candidate shortly responded by calling his opponent a fool. A regular uproar ensued, and one of the professors indignantly declared that it was thirty years since the platform of the school of philosophy had been profaned by such disgraceful behaviour. The candidate retorted that it was thirty years since any one had been so disgracefully treated. This candidate was Friedrich Schlegel, in those days so much dreaded on account of his terrible opinions that he was sometimes refused permission to spend a night in a town. In a rescript from the *Universitets-Kuratorium* of the Electorate of Hanover to the Pro-Rector of Göttingen, dated September 26, 1800, we read: "Should the Professor's brother, Friedrich Schlegel, notorious for the immoral tendency of his writings, come to Göttingen, purposing to stay there for any time, this is not to be permitted; you will be so good as to intimate to him that he must leave the town."

Somewhat harsh justice this—and all the to-do was on account of *Lucinde!*

It is not the creative power displayed in it which makes *Lucinde* one of the most important works of the Romantic School, for, in spite of all the "fleshly" talk in the book, there is no flesh and blood in it, no real body. Neither is it depth of thought. There is more philosophy in the few

paradoxical pages written by Schopenhauer under the title *Metaphysik der Liebe* than in pretentious *Lucinde* from beginning to end. It is not even a bacchantic joy in nature, in life. If we compare it with Heine's *Ardinghello*, a book glowing with genuine Southern joy of life, we see clearly how anæmic and theoretic *Lucinde* is. It is as a manifesto and programme that the book is valuable. Its main idea is to proclaim the unity and harmony of life as revealed to us most clearly and most comprehensibly in the passion of love, which gives a sensual expression to the spiritual emotion, and spiritualises the sensual pleasure. What it aims at depicting is the transformation of real life into poetry, into art, into Schiller's "play" of powers, into a dreamy, imaginative existence, with every longing satisfied, a life in which man, acting with no aim, living for no purpose, is initiated into the mysteries of nature, "understands the plaint of the nightingale, the smile of the new-born babe, and all that is mysteriously revealed in the hieroglyphics of flowers and stars."

This book is totally misunderstood by those who, like Kierkegaard, arm themselves with a whole set of dogmatic principles, and fall upon it, exclaiming: "What it aims at is the unmitigated sensuality which excludes the element of spirituality; what it combats is the spirituality which includes an element of sensuality." One can scarcely realise the blindness implied by such an utterance—but there are no better blinders than those provided by orthodoxy. Nor is it possible really to understand *Lucinde* so long as, like Gutzkow, we only see in it a vindication of the doctrine of free love, or, like Schleiermacher, a protest against incorporeal spirituality, a denunciation of the affected foolishness that denies and explains away flesh and blood. The fundamental idea of the book is the Romantic doctrine of the *identity of life and poetry*. This serious thought, however, is presented in a form expressly calculated to win the laurels of notoriety. Our admiration is aroused by the bold, defiant tone of the author's challenge, by the courage, born of conviction, with which he exposes himself to personal insult, and to public, ill-natured discussion of his private life.

F. SCHLEGEL

Worthy of admiration, too, is the skill with which the different views and watchwords of Romanticism are collected and presented to us in small compass; for all the various tendencies of the movement, developed by so many different individuals, are to be seen in this one book, spreading fanwise from a centre. But we are disgusted by the artistic impotence to which the so-called novel, in reality a mere sketch, bears witness, by its many beginnings that end in nothing, and by all the feeble self-worship which seeks to disguise barrenness by producing an artificial and unhealthy heat in which to hatch its unfertile eggs. Caroline Schlegel has preserved for us the following biting epigram, written soon after the book came out—

> "Der Pedantismus bat die Phantasie
> Um einen Kuss, sie wies ihn an die Sünde;
> Frech, ohne Kraft, umarmt er die,
> Und sie genas mit einem todten Kinde,
> Genannt Lucinde."[1]

Beyond considering the word "sin" inappropriate—for *Lucinde* only sins against good taste and true poetry—I have no fault to find with this cruel satire.

At the very core of *Lucinde* we have once again subjectivity, self-absorption, in the form of an arbitrariness which may develop into anything—revolution, effrontery, bigotry, reaction—because it is not from the beginning associated with anything that is a power, because the Ego does not act in the service of an idea which could give to its endeavour stability and value; it acts neither in the service of civil nor of intellectual liberty. This arbitrariness or lawlessness, which, in the domain of art, becomes the Friedrich Schlegelian "irony," the artist's attitude of aloofness from his subject, his free play with it (resulting, as far as poetry is concerned, in the dictatorship of pure form, which mocks at its own substance and destroys its own illusions), becomes in the domain of real life an irony which is the dominant feature in the characters and lives of the gifted few, the aristocracy of

[1] "Pedantry asked Fancy for a kiss; she sent him to Sin; audaciously but impotently he embraces Sin; she bears him a dead child, by name Lucinde."

intellect. This irony is a riddle to the profane, who "lack the sense of it." It is "the freest of all licences," because by its means a man sets himself outside of and above himself; yet it is also the most subject to law, being, we are told, unqualified and inevitable. It is a perpetual self-parody, incomprehensible to "the harmonious vulgar" (*harmonisch Platten*—the name bestowed by the Romanticists on those who live contentedly in a trivial, common-place harmony), who mistake its earnest for jest and its jest for earnest.

It is not merely in name that this irony bears a fundamental resemblance to Kierkegaard's, which also aristocratically "chooses to be misunderstood." The Ego of genius is the truth, if not in the sense in which Kierkegaard would have us understand his proposition, "Subjectivity is the truth," still in the sense that the Ego has every externally valid commandment and prohibition in its power; and, to the astonishment and scandal of the world, invariably expresses itself in paradoxes. Irony is "divine audacity." In audacity thus comprehended there are endless possibilities. It is freedom from prejudice, yet it suggests the possibility of the most audacious defence of all possible kinds of prejudices. It is more easily attainable, we are told, by woman than by man. "Like the feminine garb, the feminine intellect has this advantage over the masculine, that its possessor by a single daring movement can rise above all the prejudices of civilisation and bourgeois conventionality, at once transporting herself into the state of innocence and the lap of Nature." The lap of Nature! There is an echo of Rousseau's voice even in this wanton tirade. We seem to hear the trumpet-call of revolution; what we really hear is only the proclamation of reaction. Rousseau desired to return to the state of nature, when men roamed naked through the pathless forests and lived upon acorns. Schelling wished to turn the course of evolution back to the primeval ages, to the days before man had fallen. Schlegel blows revolutionary melodies on the great romantic "wonder-horn." But, as we read in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn:* "Es blies ein Jäger wohl in sein Horn—Und Alles was er blies, das war verlorn."[1]

[1] "A hunter blew into his horn, and all that he blew the wind carried away."

The result is not intellectual emancipation, but simply a refinement of pleasure. The whole wide domain of love is transformed into the domain of art. As Romantic poetry is poetry to the second power, poetry about poetry, refined and chastened poetry, so the love of the Romanticists is refined and chastened love, "the art of love." The different degrees of the higher sensuality are described and classified. I refer the reader to *Lucinde*, which does not, like *Ardinghello*, present us with voluptuous descriptions, but merely with dry, pedantic theory, the empty framework of which it is left to the reader's experience and imagination to fill. Romantic audacity is, in one of its aspects, idleness, the indolence of genius. Idleness is described as "the life-atmosphere of innocence and inspiration." In its highest expression it is pure passivity, the life of the plant. "The highest, most perfect life is a life of pure vegetation." The Romanticists return to nature to such good purpose that they revert to the plant. Passive enjoyment of the eternally enduring moment would be their idea of perfection. "I meditated seriously," says Julius to Lucinde, "upon the possibility of an eternal embrace." As genius, which is independent of toil and trouble, and voluptuous enjoyment, which in itself is passive bliss, have nothing to do with aim, action, or utility, so idleness, *dolce far niente*, comes to be regarded as the best that life can offer, and purpose, which leads to systematic action, is denounced as ridiculous and philistine. The principal utterance to this effect in *Lucinde* is the following: "*Industry and utility* are the angels of death with the flaming swords, who stand in the way of man's return to Paradise." Yes, that is exactly what they are! Industry and utility bar the way back to all the Paradises which lie behind us. Therefore we hold them sacred! Utility is one of the main forms of good; and what is industry but the renunciation of distracting pleasures, the enthusiasm, the power, whereby this good is attained!

Return to perfection is, in art, a return to the lawlessness of genius, to the stage at which the artist may do one thing, or may do another which is exactly the opposite. In life it is the retrogression of idleness, for he who is idle goes

back, back to passive pleasure. In philosophy it is the return to intuitive beliefs, beliefs to which Schlegel applies the name of religion ; which religion in its turn leads back to Catholicism. As far as nature and history are concerned, it is retrogression towards the conditions of the primeval Paradise.[1] Thus it is the central idea of Romanticism itself—retrogression—which explains how it was that even the heaven-storming *Lucinde*, like all the other heaven-stormers of the Romanticists, had not the slightest practical outcome.

[1] A. Ruge: *Gesammelte Schriften*, i. 328, &c.

VI

ROMANTIC PURPOSELESSNESS

In *Lucinde*, then, as in a nutshell, are to be found all the theories which, later in the history of Romanticism, are developed and illustrated by examples. In such an essay as that on the Instinct of Change by the Æsthete in Kierkegaard's *Enten-Eller* ("Either-Or") idleness is systematised. "Never adopt any calling or profession. By so doing a man becomes simply one of the mob, a tiny bolt in the great machinery of the state; he ceases to be master. . . . But though we hold aloof from all regular callings, we ought not to be inactive, but to attach great importance to occupation which is identical with idleness. . . . The whole secret lies in the independence, the absence of restraint. We are apt to believe that there is no art in acting unrestrained by any law; in reality the most careful calculation is required, if we are not to go astray, but to obtain enjoyment from it. . . ."

Idleness, lawlessness, enjoyment! This is the three-leaved clover which grows all over the Romanticist's field. In such a book as Eichendorff's *Das Leben eines Taugenichts* ("Life of a Ne'er-do-Well") idleness is idealised and exalted in the person of the hero. And purposelessness is another important item, which must on no account be overlooked. It is another designation for the genius of Romanticism. "To have a purpose, to act according to that purpose, artificially to combine purpose with purpose, and thereby create new purposes, is a bad habit, which has become so deeply rooted in the foolish nature of godlike man, that he is obliged, when for once it is his desire to float aimlessly upon the stream of constantly changing images and emotions, to do even this of settled purpose. . . . It is very certain, my friend, that man is by nature a serious animal." (Julius to Lucinde.)

On the subject of this utterance, even that orthodox

Christian, Kierkegaard, says: "In order not to misjudge Schlegel, we must bear in mind the perverted ideas which had insinuated themselves into men's minds in regard to many of the relations of life, and which had specially and indefatigably striven to make love as tame, well broken-in, heavy, sluggish, useful, and obedient, as any other domestic animal—in short, as unerotic as possible. . . . There is a very narrow-minded morality, a policy of expediency, a futile teleology, which many men worship as an idol, an idol that claims every infinite aspiration as its legitimate offering. Love is considered nothing in itself; it only acquires importance from the purpose it is made to serve in the paltry play which holds the stage of family life." It is perhaps admissible to conclude that what Kierkegaard says about "the tame, well broken-in, sluggish, and useful domestic animal, love," found its most apt application in Germany, which at that time was undoubtedly the home of the old-fashioned womanliness. The satirical sallies in Tieck's comedies occasionally point in the same direction. In his *Däumling* ("Hop-o'-my-thumb") a husband complains of his wife's craze for knitting, which gives him no peace; a complaint which, perhaps, can only be understood in Germany, where to this day ladies are to be seen knitting even in places of public entertainment—at the concerts on the Brühlsche Terrasse in Dresden, for example. Herr Semmelziege says:—

"Des Hauses Sorge nahm zu sehr den Sinn ihr ein,
Die Sauberkeit, das Porzellan, die Wäsche gar:
Wenn ich ihr wohl von meiner ew'gen Liebe sprach,
Nahm sie der Bürste vielbehaartes Brett zur Hand,
Um meinem Rock die Fäden abzukehren still.

. . . . . .

Doch hätt' ich gern geduldet Alles, ausser Eins:
Dass, wo sie stand, und wo sie ging, auswärts, im Haus,
Auch im Concert, wenn Tongewirr die Schöpfung schuf,

. . . . . .

Da zaspelnd, haspelnd, heftig rauschend, nimmer still,
Ellnbogen fliegend, schlagend Seiten und Geripp,
Sie immerdar den Strickstrumpf eifrig handgehabt." [1]

[1] "Her mind was occupied with household cares—
The washing, and the china, and the cook:

The most comical part of this satire is the passage which, whether intentionally or unintentionally on the author's part, reads like a parody of the well-known Roman Elegy in which Goethe drums the hexameter measure, "leise mit fingernder Hand," upon his mistress's back :—

> "Einst als des Thorus heilig Lager uns umfing,
> Am Himmel glanzvoll prangte Lunas keuscher Schein,
> Der goldnen Aphrodite Gab' erwünschend mir,
> Von silberweissen Armen ich umflochten lag.
> Schon denkend, welch ein Wunderkind so holder Nacht,
> Welch Vaterlandserretter, kraftgepanzert, soll
> Dem zarten Leib entspriessen nach der Horen Tanz,
> Fühl' ich am Rücken hinter mir gar sanften Schlag :
> Da wähn ich, Liebsgekose neckt die Schulter mir,
> Und lächle fromm die süsse Braut und sinnig an :
> Bald naht mir der Enttäuschung grauser Höllenschmerz
> Das Strickzeug tanzt auf meinem Rücken thätig fort ;
> Ja, stand das Werk just in der Ferse Beugung, wo
> Der Kundigste, ob vielem Zählen, selber pfuscht."[1]

When the cult of the useful is carried as far as this, we can understand advocacy of purposelessness.

But purposelessness and idleness are inseparable. "Only Italians," we are told, "know how to walk, and only Orientals how to lie ; and where has the mind developed with more

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> Did I begin to speak of endless love,
> She took the bristled clothes-brush in her hand,
> And calmly turned me round and brushed my coat.
> . . . . . .
> All this I bore quite placidly, but not
> That, sitting, standing, everywhere we went,
> Yes, even at concerts, when sweet strains beguiled,
> . . . . . .
> Entwining, clicking, rustling, never still,
> Her elbows flying, thumping on her side,
> Her knitting-needles vigorously she plied."

[1] "The sacred hymeneal couch had received us ; Luna's chaste beams illumined our chamber. Encircled by white arms I lay, praying for Aphrodite's favour, dreaming of the marvellous child that needs must be the offspring of a night like this, the mighty hero who in fulness of time shall see the light. Soft taps upon my shoulder rouse me from my dream ; 'tis my sweet bride caressing me ; I thank her silently, with tender, meaning smile. One moment later, and my heart is torn by hellish pangs of disillusionment ; it is her knitting that is dancing on my back ; worse still—she is at the turning of the heel, that point when the most skilful, despite their counting, often blunder."

refinement and sweetness than in India? And in every clime it is idleness which distinguishes the noble from the simple, and which is, therefore, the essence of nobility."

This last assertion is outrageous, but its very audacity is significant. It shows the attitude of Romanticism towards the masses. To have the means to do nothing is, in its estimation, the true patent of nobility. Its heroes are those who cultivate the unremunerative arts, and are supported by others—kings and knights like those in Fouqué's and Ingemann's books, artists and poets like those in Tieck's and Novalis's. It separates itself from humanity, will do nothing for it, but only for the favoured few. The hero and heroine in *Lucinde* are the gifted artist and the woman of genius; it is not the ordinary union, but the "nature-marriage" or the "art-marriage" (*Naturehe*, *Kunstehe*) for which our interest is claimed. Observe how Julius at once asks Lucinde whether her child, if a girl, shall be trained as a portrait or as a landscape painter. Only as a member of the fraternity of artists do her parents take any interest in her. Only authors and artists have part and lot in the poetry of life.

It is not difficult to understand how it was that *Lucinde* was barren of any social results. But though the book had no practical outcome, though it was too feeble to effect any kind of reform, there was, nevertheless, something practical underlying it.

Let us cast a glance at the principal characters. They stand out in strong relief upon a background of the profoundest scorn for all the prose of real life and all the conventions of society. The book is in no wise ashamed of its erotic theories; in its conscious purity it feels itself elevated above the judgment of the vulgar: "It is not only the kingly eagle which dares to scorn the screaming of the ravens; the swan, too, is proud, and pays as little heed. Its only care is that its white wings shall not lose their brightness; its only desire, to cling, unruffled, to Leda's breast, and breathe forth all that is mortal in it in song."

The image is pretty and daring, but is it true? The story of Leda and the swan has been treated in so many ways.

Julius is a pessimistic (*zerrissener*) young man, an artist, of course. We are told in the *Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit*, the chapter containing what Flaubert has called *l'éducation sentimentale*, that it was strikingly characteristic of him that he could play faro with apparently passionate eagerness, and yet in reality be absent-minded and careless; he would dare everything in the heat of the moment, and as soon as he had lost would turn indifferently away. Such a trait may not excite our admiration, but it at all events produces a pretty distinct impression of a pleasure-loving, *blasé* young man, who, feeling no powerful impulse towards action, seeks for excitement while leading a life of careless, coldly despairing idleness. The history of his development is indicated, as is often the case with quite young men, simply by a succession of female names.

Of the women in question we have only very slight sketches, like the pencil-drawings in an album. One of these introductory portraits is rather more elaborated than the rest, that of a *dame aux camélias* sunk in Oriental indolence, who, like the original *dame aux camélias*, is raised above her position by a true passion, and dies when she is neither understood nor believed. She dies by her own hand, makes a brilliant exit from life, and seems to us, as she is described sitting in her boudoir with her hands in her lap, surrounded by great mirrors and inhaling perfumes, like a living image of the æsthetic stupor of self-contemplation and self-absorption, which was the final development of Romanticism. After passing through numbers of erotic experiences, all equally and exceedingly repulsive, Julius finally makes the acquaintance of his feminine counterpart, Lucinde, whose impression is never effaced. "In her he met a youthful artist" (Of course!), "who, like himself, passionately worshipped beauty and loved nature and solitude. In her landscapes one felt a fresh breath of real air. She painted not to gain a living or to perfect herself in an art" (On no account any purpose or utility!) "but simply for pleasure" (Dilettantism and irony!). "Her productions were slight water-colour sketches. She had lacked the patience and industry required to learn oil-painting." (No industry!) . . . "Lucinde had a decided leaning

towards the romantic" (Of course she had; she is romance incarnate!). "She was one of those who do not live in the ordinary world, but in one created by themselves. . . . With courageous determination she had broken with all conventions, cast off all bonds, and lived in perfect freedom and independence." From the time when Julius meets her, his art too becomes more fervid and inspired. He paints the nude "in a flood of vitalising light;" his figures "were like animated plants in human shapes."

With Julius and Lucinde life flows on smoothly and melodiously, "like a beautiful song," in perpetually aroused and satisfied longing. The action passes, as it were, in a studio where the easel stands close to the alcove. Lucinde becomes a mother, and their union is now the "marriage of nature" (*die Naturehe*). "What united us before was love and passion. Now nature has united us more closely." The birth of the child gives the parents "civic rights in the state of nature" (probably Rousseau's), the only civic rights they seem to have valued. The Romanticists were as indifferent to social and political rights as Kierkegaard's hero, who was of opinion that we ought to be glad that there are some who care to rule, thereby freeing the rest of us from the task.

VII

"LUCINDE" IN REAL LIFE

BEHIND this indistinct picture lay a far more definitely outlined reality. The youthful life of the hero corresponded pretty accurately, as Friedrich Schlegel's letters show, with that of the author. In those days Berlin had not yet become pious, but was, according to the evidence of contemporaries, a species of Venusberg, which none approached with impunity. The example of the throne sanctioned every species of moral licence. Enthusiasm for art and literature superseded the official morality which a short time before had been so powerful, but from which men were rapidly emancipating themselves.

In the autumn of 1799, the year in which *Lucinde* was published, Friedrich Schlegel wrote to Schleiermacher: "People here have been behaving so outrageously that Schelling has had a fresh attack of his old enthusiasm for irreligion, in which I support him with all my might. He has composed an epicurean confession of faith in the Hans Sachs-Goethe style." This was *Der Widerporst.*

"Kann es fürwahr nicht länger ertragen,
Muss wieder einmal um mich schlagen,
Wieder mich rühren mit allen Sinnen,
So mir dachten zu entrinnen
Von den hohen, überirdischen Lehren,
Dazu sie mich wollten mit Gewalt bekehren
Darum, so will auch ich bekennen
Wie ich in mir es fühle brennen,
Wie mir's in allen Adern schwillt,
Mein Wort so viel wie anderes gilt,
Da ich in bös' und guten Stunden
Mich habe gar trefflich befunden,
Seit ich gekommen in's Klare,
Die Materie sei das einzig Wahre.

Halte nichts vom Unsichtbaren,
Halt' mich allein am Offenbaren,
Was ich kann riechen, schmecken, fühlen,
Mit allen Sinnen drinnen wühlen.
Mein einzig' Religion ist die,
Dass ich liebe ein schönes Knie,
Volle Brust und schlanke Hüften,
Dazu Blumen mit süssen Düften,
Aller Lust volle Nährung,
Aller Liebe süsse Gewährung.
D'rum, sollt's eine Religion noch geben
(Ob ich gleich kann ohne solche leben),
Könnte mir vor den andern allen
Nur die katholische gefallen,
Wie sie war in den alten Zeiten,
Da es gab weder Zanken noch Streiten,
Waren alle ein Mus und Kuchen,
Thäten's nicht in der Ferne suchen,
Thäten nicht nach dem Himmel gaffen,
Hatten von Gott'nen lebend'gen Affen,
Hielten die Erde für's Centrum der Welt,
Zum Centrum der Erde Rom bestellt,
Darin der Statthalter residirt
Und der Welttheile Scepter führt,
Und lebten die Laien und die Pfaffen
Zusammen wie im Land der Schlaraffen,
Dazu sie im hohen Himmelhaus
Selber lebten in Saus und Braus,
War ein täglich Hochzeithalten
Zwischen der Jungfrau und dem Alten."[1]

[1] Plitt: *Aus Schelling's Leben*, i. 282. "I can bear it no longer; I must live once more, must let my senses have free play—these senses of which I have well-nigh been robbed by the grand transcendental theories to which they have done their utmost to convert me. But I too will now confess how my heart leaps and the hot blood rushes through my veins; my word is as good as any man's; and of good cheer have I been, in fair weather and in foul, since I became persuaded that there is nothing real but matter. I care not for the invisible; I keep to the tangible, to what I can taste and smell, and feel, and satisfy all my senses with. I have no religion but this, that I love a well-shaped knee, a fair, plump bosom, a slender waist, flowers with the sweetest odours, full satisfaction of all desires, the granting of all sweet love can ask. If I am obliged to have a religion (though I can live most happily without it), then it must be the Catholic, such as it was in the olden days, when there was no scolding and quarrelling, when all were kneaded of one dough. They did not trouble about the far-off, did not look longingly up to heaven; they had a living image of God. The earth they held to be the centre of the universe, and the centre of the earth was Rome. There the great vicegerent sat enthroned, and wielded the sceptre of the world; and priests and laity lived together as they live in the land of Cocagne; and in the house of God itself high revelry was held."

Such a poem from such a hand is a genuine proof of the spirit of the times; and it is instructive to observe that when Wilhelm Schlegel (acting upon Goethe's advice) refuses to publish the poem in the *Athenæum*, Novalis, against whom it was especially directed, writes: "I cannot understand why *Der Widerporst* should not be printed. Is it on account of its atheism? Just think of *Die Götter Griechenlands!*"

The fashions were revolutionary—uncovered bosoms, orientally flowing garments. The tone of the most notable young women of the day was excessively free. No one was more talked of for her beauty at this time than Pauline Wiesel. She was the wife of a highly intellectual man, whose scepticism and satirical, cynical wit made a deep and disturbing impression upon young Tieck (he was the model for Abdallah and William Lovell); and she was one of Prince Louis Ferdinand's many mistresses. The attachment of the dashing young prince, in this case a real passion, still glows in his letters. A contemporary wrote of her: "I look upon her in the light of a phenomenon of Greek mythology." Alexander von Humboldt walked more than thirty miles to see her. It is characteristic of the times that the connection by which Pauline Wiesel compromised herself roused no disapprobation among her more advanced women friends. The irreproachable Rahel, for example, has not a word of blame for it; one might almost imagine that she envied Pauline. As a young girl she writes despondently: "Every means, every possible preparation for living, and yet one must never live; I never shall, and those who dare to do so have the wretched world, the whole world, against them."

The original of Lucinde, however, was certainly superior to her portrait, a woman of an altogether nobler type. She belonged to Rahel's circle, that group of clever young Jewesses who then represented the noblest, freest intellectual life of Berlin — a circle historically important from the fact that it was the only one in which as yet Goethe's fame was really established and true homage paid him.[1] The lady in question was Moses Mendelssohn's

[1] Köpke: *Tieck's Leben*, i. 193.

clever, self-reliant daughter, Dorothea, who, to please her parents, had bestowed her hand upon the well-known banker, Veit. It was not by beauty but by her wit and her keen intellectuality that she captivated Friedrich Schlegel. He was at the time twenty-five years of age, she thirty-two. There was nothing sensuous or frivolous in either her appearance or manner; she had large piercing eyes and a masculine severity of expression. In his letters to his brother Wilhelm, Friedrich Schlegel praises "her sterling worth." "She is," he says, "very straightforward, and cares for nothing but love, music, wit, and philosophy." In 1789 Dorothea was divorced from her husband and followed Schlegel to Jena. The latter writes at this time: "It has never been our intention to bind ourselves to each other by any marriage contract, though I have long considered it impossible that anything but death should part us. The calculation and adjustment of present and future is antipathetic to me, yet if the detested ceremony were the necessary condition of inseparableness, I should act according to the requirement of the moment and sacrifice my most cherished opinions."

In the arranging of their relations, none of their intimates helped Friedrich and Dorothea more than their clerical friend, Schleiermacher. On none of Schlegel's friends had *Lucinde* had such a powerful effect. Schleiermacher was at this time chaplain of the Charité Church in Berlin. He had long followed Friedrich's emancipatory endeavours with warm sympathy, and even admiration. In his essay *On Diotima*, as well as in his harsh criticism of Schiller's *Würde der Frauen*, Friedrich had attacked the traditional conception of woman's position in society. He had held up to contempt the ordinary marriage, in which the wedded pair "live together with a feeling of mutual contempt, he seeing in her only her sex, she in him his social position, and both in their children their own production and property." What he desired was the moral and intellectual emancipation of women. Intellect and culture, combined with enthusiasm, were the qualities which in his eyes made a woman lovable. The ordinary ideal of womanliness he

scorned. He writes with bitterness of the stupidity and criminality of the men who demand ignorance and innocence in women, thereby compelling them to be prudish. Prudery is false pretence of innocence. True innocence in woman he maintains to be perfectly compatible with intellectual culture. It exists wherever there is religion, *i.e.* capacity for enthusiasm. The idea that noble, enlightened free-thought is less becoming in the case of women than of men is only one of the many generally accepted platitudes set in circulation by Rousseau. "The thraldom of woman" is one of the curses of humanity. His highest desire as an author was, as he naïvely puts it, "to found a system of morality" (eine Moral zu stiften). He calls opposition to positive law and conventional ideas of right, "the first moral impulse" felt by man.

In his *Vernunftkatechismus für edle Frauen* ("Catechism of Reason for Noble-minded Women"), a fragment which appeared in the *Athenæum*, Schleiermacher writes in exactly the same strain, calling upon women to free themselves from the bonds of their sex. Nay, incredible as it may sound, it is quite possible (as Haym has proved) that the frequently quoted saying of Friedrich Schlegel, that there is nothing of serious importance to be urged against a marriage *à quatre*, really emanated from Schleiermacher. It is levelled at the many degrading and unreal marriages, at the "unsuccessful attempts at marriage," which the State in its foolishness makes binding, and which prevent the possibility of a true marriage. The writer of the fragment in which the saying occurs observes that most marriages are only preparatory and distant approximations to the true marriage; and Schleiermacher, in his Letters, writes that many attempts are necessary, and that "if four or five couples were taken together, really good marriages might result, provided they were allowed to exchange."

The underlying reason for the warm personal interest taken by Schleiermacher in Friedrich and Dorothea is, no doubt, to be found in his own position and circumstances at that time. A devoted attachment existed between him and Eleonore Grunow, the childless and most unhappy wife of a Berlin clergyman.

It seemed to Schleiermacher that the popular indignation roused by *Lucinde* was largely compounded of philistine and pharisaical ignorance. The very people who abused it were revelling in Wieland's and Crébillon's immoral tales. "It reminds me," he says, "of the trials for witchcraft, where malice formulated the charge, and pious stupidity carried out the sentence." But what especially led to his ardent championship of the persecuted pair was, he tells us himself, the fact that most of those who complained loudly of offended morality were simply seeking a pretext for a private personal attack on Schlegel.

An invincible spirit dwelt in Dorothea's frail body. She bore unfalteringly all that her violation of conventional morality brought upon her — private condemnation and public defamation in the shape of innuendoes in the attacks on *Lucinde*. She displayed the most enduring devotion and the most self-sacrificing faithfulness to the man she had chosen. She not only shares his interests and aims, but bears with his unreasonableness and resigns herself uncomplainingly to the caprices of the most capricious of lovers. Nay, more than this, her good sense and cheerfulness scatter all the clouds of despondency that gather round herself and others. Her merry laughter brings relief from Schleiermacher's subtle argumentativeness and Friedrich's transcendental irony. Free in every other respect from feminine sentimentality, she is completely engrossed in admiration of the man she loves, and, with touching modesty, centres all her pride in him. When her novel *Florentin* is published, a book in which, in spite of its many weaknesses, there is more creative power than in any of Friedrich Schlegel's productions, what makes her happiest and proudest is that his name (as editor) stands on the title-page. She jests merrily on the subject of her literary activity. Blushing and with a beating heart, she sends the first volume of her book to Schleiermacher, and she smiles at the numerous red strokes which adorn the returned manuscript. "There is always the deuce in it where the dative and accusative ought to be." The fact that she too felt impelled to write at the time (about the year 1800) when all the Romanticists, even Schleiermacher and Schelling, were committing literary sins,

marks her as one of the German Romantic literary circle; and, moreover, her novel is, in reality, an expression of all the prevailing ideas, an imitation of *Wilhelm Meister* and *Franz Sternbald*, an exaltation of the harmoniously cultivated few at the expense of the vulgar crowd, a glorification of the free Bohemian life, of idleness and admirable frivolity, of purposelessness in the midst of the prose of reality.

Dorothea has endowed her hero with characteristics which obviously correspond to Friedrich's as they appeared to her admiring woman's eyes. "In spite of a peculiar and often repellent manner, he has the gift of making himself popular, and wins all hearts without caring whether he does or not. It is of no avail to arm one's self against him with all one's pride; somehow or other he gains entire possession of one. It is often most exasperating not to be able to withstand him, as he himself is not to be won. At times it seems as if he attached another meaning to his words than their obvious one; sometimes when the most flattering things are said to him, he looks utterly indifferent, as if it were a matter of course; at other times, quite unexpectedly, some chance word, let fall without any special intention, affords him the greatest pleasure; he either finds in it or puts into it some peculiar meaning. . . . But you can imagine how often he gives offence in society."

Florentin's confessions, too, especially those relating to his wild life as a youth in Venice, remind us of Friedrich's youthful experiences in Leipzig. Although Florentin is an Italian, he feels himself strongly attracted by German art and German artists. He teaches himself to draw and paint, and makes his living, now as the gifted Romantic dilettante artist, now as the no less Romantic musician, roaming from village to village. His birth is wrapt in mystery. He is, as he himself says, "the solitary, the outcast, the child of chance. Something indescribable, which I can only call my destiny, drives me on." He avoids all ties of affection: "Alone will I bear the curse which has been laid upon me."[1]

It is unnecessary to criticise this characterisation in

[1] Florentin, pp. 65, 80, 170, 195, 230, 310.

detail and point out how naïve and excessively Romantic it is. None the less, its writer is in many ways superior to her surroundings. Not for nothing was she the daughter of the sober, sagacious Moses Mendelssohn.

She would like, she says, to see Friedrich the literary artist, but she would love him better still if she could see in him the worthy citizen of a well-ordered state; it seems to her, indeed, that the character and desires of all her revolutionary friends make literary occupations, reviewing and such-like, as unsuitable for them as a child's cradle for a giant: her ideal is Götz von Berlichingen, who only took up the pen as a rest from the sword.[1]

Here again we are impressed by what strikes us in reading of Frau von Kalb, namely, that the women of this period display more virile and more concentrated power than the men, and that they persist in treating from the social standpoint questions which the men desire to treat only from the literary. They feel the oppression of existing circumstances more strongly, are less enervated by overmuch book-learning, and look at things more practically than the men.

The first important event in the life of the young couple was Fichte's coming to live with them. Fichte had been accused of teaching atheism, and his position as a professor was in jeopardy. Caroline Schlegel writes to a friend: "I must answer your questions about the Fichte affair, though it is a very painful one to me and to all admirers of honourable, frank behaviour. You know pretty well yourself what to think of the first accusation, made by a bigoted sovereign and his counsellors, half of them Catholics, the rest Moravian Brethren. . . . But Fichte is so exasperated by all sorts of reports from Weimar, about things looking bad for him there, &c. &c., that he declares he will resign if they reprimand him, or put any restriction on his teaching. . . . All who would stand well at court, and the professors whom Fichte has outshone, denounce his boldness and precipitancy. He is abandoned, actually avoided."

In a letter written jointly by Friedrich, Schleiermacher, and Dorothea, the last-mentioned says: "Things are going

[1] Haym, *Die romantische Schule*, 509, 525, 663, &c.

well with Fichte here; he is left in peace. Nicolai has intimated that no notice whatever will be taken of him so long as he does not attempt to give public lectures; this would not be well received. . . . I get on excellently with Fichte, and feel as much at home in this gathering of philosophers as if I had never been accustomed to anything inferior. Though I am still a little timid, this has nothing to do with Fichte personally, but rather with my own position to the world and to Friedrich—I am afraid —yet possibly I am mistaken. I cannot write another word, dear, for my philosophers are pacing up and down the room so incessantly that I am quite giddy."

Here we have a little domestic scene from Dorothea's life in Berlin. The three were so comfortable together that Fichte was desirous to make the arrangement permanent. He writes to his wife that he is trying to persuade Friedrich to remain in Berlin, and August Wilhelm and his wife to remove there. "If my plan succeeds, the two Schlegels, Schelling, who must also be persuaded to come, and we ourselves will form one family, take a large house, have only one cook, &c., &c."[1] The plan was not carried out. The wives of the two Schlegels did not get on with each other. But is it not like a breath from another world to come, in the midst of all this solicitude for Fichte and indignation at the wrong done him, upon such a passage in one of Dorothea's letters as the following: "I heartily thank your mother for the sweet picture of the saint. I keep it where I can always see it. She is the very saint I should have chosen for myself; she suits me exactly. These pictures and the Catholic music touch me so, that I am determined, if I become a Christian, to be a Catholic."[2] Nowhere is the religious confusion which distinguishes the Romantic School more plainly displayed.

But Dorothea is not the only female portrait in *Lucinde*. During the course of his development Julius makes the acquaintance of an admirable woman, who is described as follows: "This disease was cured, was expelled, by the very first sight of a woman who was quite unique, and who was

[1] *Caroline*, i. 254, 259, 261. [2] *Caroline*, i. 393.

the first to exercise complete influence over his mind. . . . She had made her choice, and had given herself to one who was his friend as well as hers, and who was worthy of her love. Julius was the confidant. He knew exactly what it was that made him unhappy, and sternly judged his own baseness. . . . He forced all his love back into his inmost heart and let passion rage and burn and consume there. But his outward man was quite changed. So successful was he in counterfeiting the most childlike frankness and innocence, and in assuming a sort of fraternal brusqueness to prevent his melting into tenderness, that she never entertained the slightest suspicion. She was gay and genial in her happiness ; suspecting nothing, she shunned nothing, but gave her mood and wit free play when she found him unamiable. All the nobility and all the grace, all the divinity and all the waywardness of the feminine character found in her their most refined, their most womanly expression. Each quality was allowed to develop as freely and vigorously as if it were the only one ; and the daring mixture of dissimilar elements did not produce confusion, for a spirit inspired it which was a living breath of harmony and love. In the course of the same hour she would reproduce some comic episode with the refined abandon of the accomplished actress, and read a great poem with simple, touching dignity. At one time it pleased her fancy to shine and trifle in society, at another she was all enthusiasm and ardour, and presently she would be assisting others by word and deed, serious, unassuming, and gentle as a tender mother. Her manner of relating it made any trifling incident as entertaining as a delightful fairy tale. She embellished everything with feeling and wit ; she had a power of comprehending everything, and of ennobling everything she touched. Nothing great or good was too holy or too common for her passionate sympathy. She understood the slightest suggestion, and answered even the question that was not asked. It was not possible to make long speeches to her ; they turned naturally into interesting conversations, during which an ever-varying music of intelligent glances and sweet expressions played over her delicate features. One seemed

to see these glances and expressions while reading her letters, so lucidly and genially did she write, as if talking with her correspondent. Those who only knew this side of her might think that she was merely lovable, that she would make an enchanting actress, that nothing but metre and rhyme were wanting to make her winged words exquisite poetry. But this same woman showed on every occasion that called for it the most astonishing courage and energy; and it was from this side of her character, by her own heroic standard, that she judged men."

There is more praise than art in this portrait. Sainte-Beuve would have given us a very different delineation. The original of the picture is a woman who, after the publication of her letters under the title *Caroline*, was known, as if she had been a queen, only by this, her Christian name. It simplified matters, too, to designate her thus, for she had had so many surnames that it was difficult to know by which to call her. She was a daughter of the well-known German philologist, Michaelis; her first husband was a Dr. Böhmer; after his death she married A. W. Schlegel, and her third husband was Schelling. These two last marriages placed her in the centre of the Romantic circle, which seems naturally to group itself round her. She was its own special muse. Grier, the gifted translator of Calderon and Ariosto, says of her that she is by far the cleverest woman he has known. Steffens and Wilhelm von Humboldt use similar expressions. A. W. Schlegel writes of several of his essays, that they are "in part the work of a highly gifted woman, who possessed all the qualifications of a successful author, but whose ambition did not lie in that direction." Schelling writes at the time of her death: "Even had she not been to me what she was, I should mourn the human being, should lament that this intellectual paragon no longer exists, this rare woman, who to masculine strength of soul and the keenest intellect united the tenderest, most womanly, most loving heart. We shall never see her like again." Her portrait is very striking—fascinating, refined, roguish, and yet tender. She is quite in Leonardo's style. Dorothea is far less complex.

Caroline was born in 1763, and was twenty-one at the time of her first marriage. A. W. Schlegel made her acquaintance whilst he was a student at Göttingen, and fell in love with her, but she refused to marry him. Intercourse between them was broken off for a time, but was carried on by correspondence while Schlegel was at Amsterdam, where he went as a tutor in 1791. Here various amorous episodes, amongst them one serious love affair, threw Caroline for a time into the shade. Meanwhile, she was entangling herself in a net of the strangest relations. In 1799 she had gone to Mainz, where she lived in the house of Georg Forster, Humboldt's teacher, a man equally distinguished as a scientist and an author. When this gifted and admirable, but far too sanguine man, embarked on revolutionary enterprises and attempted to extend French republicanism to the Rhine districts, Caroline enthusiastically aided and abetted him. She was in communication with the members of the Republican Club in Mainz, and she was unjustly suspected of communicating with the enemy through her brother-in-law, G. Böhmer, who was Custine's secretary. When Mainz was reconquered by the German troops, she was arrested, and spent several months in barbarous imprisonment, sharing a room with seven other people. From prison she wrote to A. W. Schlegel for assistance.

Her position was even worse than it appeared to be. In Mainz, in desperation at the disappointment of her dearest hopes (she had expected that the manly, energetic Tatter would offer her his hand), she had thrown herself into the arms of her adorer for the moment, a Frenchman, and the results of this connection would inevitably compromise her for ever, if she were not freed from prison in time. Schlegel's influence and her own brother's unremitting endeavours procured her release. With quiet chivalry August Wilhelm placed Caroline, now forsaken by all her other friends, under the protection of his younger brother, Friedrich. It was in these singularly unpropitious circumstances that Friedrich made her acquaintance. He was by no means prepossessed in her favour, in fact, was inclined to look upon her with contempt; yet this is how he writes: "I had

certainly not expected simplicity and a positively divine truthfulness. . . . She made a profound impression upon me. I longed to be in a position to win her confidence and friendship; but the moment she showed some return of the feeling I saw very clearly that the bare attempt would lead to the most painful struggles, and that if a friendship between us were possible at all, it could only be the fruit of much that was unjustifiable. . . . Thenceforward every selfish desire was abandoned. The relation in which I stood to her was perfectly innocent and simple. In my behaviour there was the reverence of a son, the candour of a brother, the frankness of a child, and the unobtrusiveness of a stranger." [1]

In 1796 A. W. Schlegel married his somewhat deeply compromised friend. Her circle soon included all the leading men of the day. She was in constant intercourse with Goethe, Herder, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Tieck, Schleiermacher, and Hardenberg. This was the time of Goethe's intimate connection with the young school. It was in the process of formation, and its members held their first meetings at Jena. Caroline breakfasts with Goethe, dines with Fichte, and is soon only too inseparable from Schelling.

The following extract from one of her letters to Schelling (March 1, 1801) affords an example of the vigour and the subtlety of this remarkable woman's criticism: "You surely do not expect me, dearest friend, to enlighten you as to the compass of Fichte's mind, though you almost express yourself as if you did. It has always seemed to me as if, in spite of his incomparable reasoning powers, the soundness of his deductions, his lucidity and accuracy, his direct intuition of the Ego, and his discoverer's enthusiasm—as if in spite of all this he were limited. My explanation of the matter is, that the divine spark is lacking in him; and if you have broken through a circle from which he has not been able to escape, I believe that you have done it not so much as the philosopher—don't scold me if I am using the word wrongly—but rather because there is poetry in you and none in him. Poetical inspiration led you directly to productiveness;

[1] *Caroline*, i. 347, 348.

keenness of apprehension led him to knowledge. He has light, the clearest and brightest, but you have warmth as well; and light can only illuminate, while warmth produces. Now, have I not seen all this cleverly?—just as one sees a boundless landscape through a keyhole."

In another letter we find an amusing reference to Hegel, which shows us that philosopher in a novel light: "Hegel is playing the beau and general gallant" (Hegel macht den Galanten und allgemeinen Cicisbeo).[1]

Caroline shares enthusiastically in all the efforts of the Romantic School; she revises, reviews anonymously, writes herself, influences other writers directly and indirectly. She is obliged to expend that politico-revolutionary ardour, of which she possesses a far larger share than the men, on literary skirmishes and intrigues. We find her, for instance, writing an anonymous and tolerably sharp review of Schlegel's *Ion;* Schlegel replies, also anonymously, criticising her criticism; then Caroline calls Schelling to her assistance, and he, acting as her champion, falls upon Schlegel still more heavily in a third anonymous article, written in an extremely polished manner—at the same time writing privately to him that he hopes he will not take it amiss. It is to Caroline that the misunderstanding and final rupture between Schiller and Schlegel is due; she sets the brothers against the poet by her extremely witty but unfair mockery of his style; Schiller, on his side, cannot be acquitted of having treated them with considerable haughtiness at the beginning of their literary career. His name for Caroline is "Dame Lucifer."

Caroline's worst side was displayed in her small-minded hatred of poor Dorothea Veit, whom she positively persecuted. This hatred disturbed the beautiful relation between August Wilhelm and Friedrich, who were intimate friends as well as brothers. At one time it threatened to separate them altogether. Observe the way in which she speaks of Dorothea: "Friedrich was present at the performance of *Alarkos,* and immediately afterwards got into a post-chaise and set off for France, where it is his intention to be married

[1] *Caroline,* ii. 2.

in republican fashion. Under Robespierre, drowning in the Loire went by the name of *noces républicaines;* such a wedding for one half of the couple I should not object to."

Her best qualities were called forth by her daughter, that remarkable child, Auguste Böhmer, whose name, although she died at the age of fifteen, has a place in the history of German literature. All who read this child's criticism of Friedrich or of Dorothea, or her rhymed letters to Tieck and Schleiermacher, are astounded by her precociousness. Her death was a turning-point in Caroline's life. Schelling, who very possibly had been first attracted by the daughter, drew nearer to the mother in her sudden and sad bereavement. He was then quite young, labouring ardently at his earliest works, glowing with passion, sparkling with genius, the favourite of Goethe. Caroline and he had a great common sorrow and need of consolation. Their feeling for each other soon assumed the character of passionate love. The publication by the unscrupulous opponents of the Romanticists of a pamphlet in which it was asserted that Schelling, with his crazy *Naturphilosophie* and the treatment he had recommended, had shortened the child's life, only drew them closer together. The charge was a pure fabrication. It was in his reply to this pamphlet that Schelling made use of the violent language quoted in the introduction to Lassalle's *Capital and Labour*. Caroline's relations with Schlegel had long been of the coldest; he and she lived in different towns. Had she been of a jealous disposition, she would have found abundant cause for complaint. After his separation from Caroline, Schlegel formed a connection with Tieck's sister, Sophie Bernhardi, who divorced her husband for his sake. His last attempt at marriage, with the daughter of Paulus, the rationalist, was not a success, and ended in a divorce.

When Schelling and Caroline had become so indispensable to each other that it was necessary to break the tie which bound her to Schlegel, the latter, with perfect chivalry, gave his consent. Writing of the divorce, Caroline says: "We broke a tie which neither of us had ever considered

permanently binding."[1] Her new marriage was a perfectly happy one.

The way in which Schlegel takes Caroline's decision enlightens us not only as to the theories of the Romanticists, but as to the manner in which the leaders of the school applied them in their own lives. August Wilhelm not only gives his consent, but continues to keep up a friendly correspondence with Schelling, and in literary matters the two men render each other valuable assistance. Caroline herself maintains the friendliest relations with Schlegel long after he is aware of the relation in which she stands to Schelling. She writes to him in May 1801: "Will you, please, decide a dispute between Schelling and me? Are these hexameters (Schelling's) worth anything? I consider the last lines awkward, but he maintains that they are good." Schlegel actually visited the couple at Munich, in company with Madame de Staël.

Thus even very serious personal disagreements and ruptures could not divide those whom fellowship of ideas and a common endeavour to promote them, united. The Romanticists considered personal liberty an inalienable right, and respected it in others while demanding it for themselves.

But we learn something else besides the fact that the Romanticists were very changeable in their loves, and perfectly regardless of social ties; and that something is, that their women were superior to them in everything but talent, and that what the men did was to drag them down to their own level. We see the strong-minded, energetic Dorothea, who is so keenly sensible of the pettiness of the purely literary endeavours of the Romanticists, slowly change, see her reluctantly admire *Lucinde*, then write novels herself in the prescribed style, and finally follow Friedrich to Vienna and become a Catholic along with him. Or look at the high-spirited, enthusiastic, resolute Caroline, who, as a young widow not much over twenty, attempts to revolutionise the Rhineland. So unflinching is she then, that she compromises herself recklessly, and risks the life and well-being of those dearest to her with absolute regardless-

[1] *Caroline*, ii. 237.

ness. Friedrich writes to August Wilhelm: "I shall never forgive her heartlessness in being ready to beguile you, her friend, into that vortex of ignoble dangers and worthless characters." Only a few years later we see this same woman writing anonymous reviews, favourable or unfavourable, of her husband's wretched dramas, and entirely absorbed in literary intrigues. Ever and anon her spirit is momentarily stirred by a breath wafted from the old times. Then we feel how changed she is. Writing to her daughter in October 1799, after giving her a quantity of family news, the last item of which is: "Hofrath Hufeland has returned, with wife and children," she exclaims: "But what sorry trash is all this! *Buonaparte is in Paris!* Think of that, child! All will go well again. The Russians have been driven out of Switzerland; they and the English will be obliged to capitulate with disgrace in Holland; the French are making way in Swabia; and now comes Buonaparte. Rejoice with me, or I shall think that you are entirely taken up with frivolities and have no serious thoughts at all." Then, almost in the same breath, literary gossip: "Tieck is here and we are much together. You would never believe all that these men take it into their heads to do. I will send you a sonnet on Merkel. He has been running about Berlin, telling that the Schlegels have received a reprimand from the Duke on account of the *Athenæum*, &c. So Wilhelm and Tieck set to work the other evening and wrote a wicked sonnet in his honour. It was splendid to see the two pairs of brown eyes flashing at each other, and the wild merriment with which the perfectly justifiable squib was concocted. Dorothea and I almost rolled on the floor with laughter. She knows how to laugh, which will recommend her to you. Merkel is done for; he will never recover it. There will be a terrible uproar. . . . Schelling is attacking the *Allgemeine Litteraturzeitung* with all his might. *These quarrels, however, are of no importance to you; but Buonaparte and the Russians most certainly are.*" It is as though she strove to keep the larger interests alive in her daughter, feeling that they were dying in herself. Soon she marries Schelling, and conforms to all the

established conventions of that great clerical stronghold, Bavaria.

Many great men have vainly attempted to teach the women they loved to share their interests. To my mind no worse accusation can be brought against gifted men, no surer sign of their weakness adduced than this, that, far from raising the women who have given themselves to them and followed them, they have dragged them down, taken from them their highest interests and noblest sympathies, and given them small and mean ones in exchange. From such a charge the Romanticists cannot free themselves. They treated the great women given them by the gods as they did the great ideas which were their own heritage ; they took from them the noble, liberal-minded social and political enthusiasm by which they were naturally characterised, and made them, first Romantic and literary, then remorseful, and finally Catholic.

VIII

SCHLEIERMACHER'S LETTERS

THE Romanticists themselves were by no means satisfied with *Lucinde*. Novalis has most to say in its favour. He is of opinion that there are few such personal books ; it seems to him that in it all the workings of the author's mind may be observed as distinctly as the play of chemical forces during the dissolution of a lump of sugar in a glass of water. He is somewhat disturbed by the species of delusion prevailing throughout the work, which makes man, the thinking being, a mere natural force, and which takes such possession of the reader that he finds himself deeply interested in what is simply sensual instinct. Moreover, the whole is not simple enough, not sufficiently free from pedantry. Yet "Romantic chords" are not lacking, and it is not so much the matter as the form to which he objects.

He writes at once to Caroline Schlegel: "There is nothing to object to in the ideas, but in the manner of expressing them there is a good deal which strikes me as being borrowed from Krates [the cynic]. The cry, 'Be cynical!' is not yet heard among us, and even really advanced women will blame the beautiful Athenian for having made the market-place her bridal chamber."

Quite true ; only it was not the luckless Dorothea who was to blame for the profanation, even though she did not feel incensed by the public exhibition, as we do on her behalf ; her lord and master was alone to blame.

We have seen that Caroline soon allowed her satirical wit free play in writing of *Lucinde;* and A. W. Schlegel, Schelling, Steffens, and the others privately regarded it as an *enfant terrible*, whatever their public utterances may

have been. A. W. Schlegel indeed wrote, in a sonnet to Friedrich :—

> "Dich führt zur Dichtung Andacht brünst'ger Liebe,
> Du willst zum Tempel dir das Leben bilden,
> Wo Götterrecht die Freiheit lös' und binde.
> Und dass ohn' Opfer der Altar nicht bliebe,
> Entführtest Du den himmlischen Gefilden,
> Die hohe Gluth der leuchtenden Lucinde."[1]

And when Kotzebue published the comedy, *Der hyperboräische Esel*, which satirises Friedrich and his book, August Wilhelm responded with the witty satire, *Ehrenpforte für den Präsidenten von Kotzebue;* but privately he called the book a "foolish rhapsody." Tieck called it "eine wunderliche Chimäre," and even Schleiermacher attempted to disavow his authorship of the *Letters on the Subject of Lucinde*, after his inclination to a species of sensual mysticism had given place to a Protestant-rationalistic tendency. Nevertheless, or rather, for this very reason, it is of importance that we should inquire into the nature of these letters, which were written with the aim of proving *Lucinde* to be, not merely an innocent, but a good and holy book, the worth of which is testified to by the delight which high-minded women take in it. On the letters of two such women, his sister, Ernestine, and his friend, Eleonore Grunow, Schleiermacher's own are based.

There is little of general interest for us nowadays in these letters, so we shall only notice their salient points. As *Lucinde* is the solitary contribution of Romanticism towards the solution of a social problem, and as marriage is almost the only social question grappled with by literature generally at the beginning of the century (Goethe's *Wanderjahre* alone, in the manner of Rousseau's romances, occupying itself with a wider range of such questions), it will be of interest to compare the utterances of the different European literatures on this subject.

Schleiermacher's book is an attack upon prudery. At

[1] It is the sacred ardour of love that makes of thee a poet; thou aimest at transforming life into a temple, where divine right binds and looses. And that the altar may not lack a victim, thou hast stolen from heaven the noble ardour of the glorious Lucinde.

the very beginning he writes: "I was almost inclined to believe that you had become a prude; if you had, I should have entreated you to go and settle in England, to which country I should like to banish the whole genus." And one division of the book is entirely devoted to an analysis of that false modesty which precludes true modesty, and causes so much unnecessary misery.

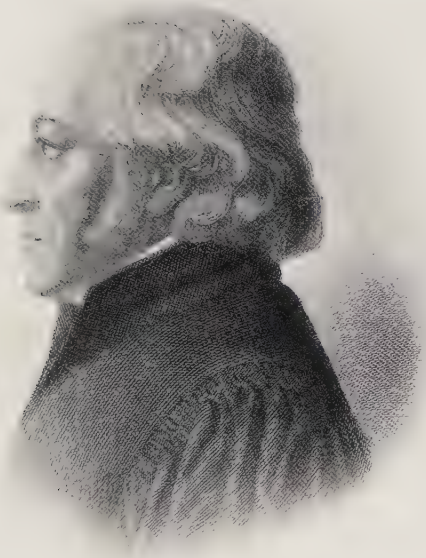
"The anxious and narrow-minded modesty by which society at the present day is characterised, has its root in the consciousness of a great and general wrongheadedness and depravity. But where is it to end? It is bound to spread farther and farther. If people are perpetually on the look-out for what is immodest, they will end by discovering it in every domain of thought, and all conversation and social intercourse must cease. . . . utter depravation and the perfect education by which man returns to innocence, both do away with modesty; in the first case true modesty, as well as false, is destroyed; in the second, it ceases to be a thing to which much attention is paid or much importance attached.[1]

"Is it not the case, dear child, that everything spiritual in man has its beginning in an instinctive, vague, inward impulse, which only the action of the individual, frequently repeated, develops into definite, conscious will and a perfected faculty. Not until they have developed so far can there be any question of a lasting connection between these inward impulses and definite objects. Why should love be different from everything else? Is it reasonable to expect the highest faculty of man to be perfect from the first? Should it be easier to love than to eat and drink? Surely in love too there must be preparatory attempts, from which nothing permanent results, but which all tend to make the feeling more distinct and more noble. The connection of these attempts with any definite object is merely accidental, at first often purely imaginary, and always ephemeral—as ephemeral as the feeling itself, which soon gives place to one more clearly defined and intense. Inquire of the most mature and highly cultivated men and women; you will find

[1] *Briefe über die Lucinde*, pp. 64, 83.

that they smile at the thought of their first love as at any other laughable childish performance, and often live in complete indifference side by side with the object of it. According to the nature of things it must be so, and to insist upon faithfulness and a lasting connection is as dangerous as it is foolish."

Schleiermacher naturally warns his correspondent against what he calls the chimera of the holiness of first love: "Do not believe that everything depends upon something coming of it. The novels which support this idea, and make love between the same two beings develop uninterruptedly from its first raw beginning to its highest perfection, are as hurtful as they are silly; and their authors, as a rule, have as little understanding of love as they have of art. . . . When the more or less indefinite love longing settles upon a definite object, there necessarily arises a definite connection, and a point of closest approach. When this point has been reached and you feel that it is not the right one, not one that can be held, what is there left for you to do but to part again? Only after such an attempt has been completed as an attempt, that is to say, after the connection has been broken off, can the memory of it and reflection upon it produce a truer understanding of the longing and feeling, and thus prepare for another and better attempt. Is there any obligation to make the next with the same person? Upon what can such an obligation be founded? *I, for my part, consider this more unnatural than love between brother and sister.* Allow yourself perfect liberty, then; endeavouring only to preserve a pure-minded, clear feeling that it is merely an experiment, so that you may be prevented from sanctioning and perpetuating that which is not intended to be more, by that self-surrender which, from its nature, ought to mark the end of experiments and the beginning of a true and lasting love. Such a mistake, which is both the consequence and the cause of the most miserable delusions, you must regard as the most terrible thing that can happen to you; I would have you understand that this is in reality allowing one's self to be seduced. When you have found true love, and feel yourself to have reached the point at which you can perfect your



SCHLEIERMACHER

character and make your life beautiful and worthy, diffidence and fear of the last and most precious seal of union will seem to you pure affectation. The only danger lies in the fact that every attempt, from its very nature, aims at reaching this point. The point of sufficiency can only be discovered by satiety. But if you are healthy in mind and heart, you will, as often as one of these attempts to love approaches this point, feel an aversion which is something far higher and holier than any law, or than what generally goes by the name of modesty and chastity."

Sound and sensible reflections, one and all, but neither exhaustive nor applicable to what are the real difficulties of the case. Schleiermacher warns against mistakes, but cannot remedy them, without infringing upon the sanctity of marriage, which he never calls in question. For what is to be done when the mistake has already been made? And what when it has been on one side only, when only the love of the one has grown cold, while that of the other still endures? And he does not give a word or a thought to the fact that marriage, as a social institution, does not exist for the sake of the lovers, that its original intention was to secure the father's property for the children, and that it has continued to exist because it seemed to society the only means of protecting the rising generation. Schleiermacher, the idealist, would fain discover a new moral foundation, and entirely overlooks the real, the practical difficulties. How characteristic of the nation to which the author belongs is all this pondering over feeling! An Italian once said to me: "What astonishes us most in the emotional life of the Teutonic nations is their conception and cult of love. With them love is positively a religion, something in which a good man is bound to believe. And this religion has its theology, and its philosophy, and what not. We simply love, and no more about it." I thought of this speech when reading Schleiermacher. How much ingenuity he exhibits in proving that men should not allow themselves to be disturbed by false theories when they love, and what a steadfast belief in the love which is to "complete and perfect the character," lies at the foundation of it all! It is instructive to compare with Schleiermacher's

some utterances by great authors of other nations on the same subject; they throw what is peculiarly national in his into more marked relief.

George Sand, whose first novels are the expression of the same movement in France which *Lucinde* inaugurates in Germany, says, by the mouth of the principal characters in *Jacques* and *Lucrezia Floriani:* "Paul and Virginia were able to love each other steadily and undisturbedly; for they were children brought up by the same mother. Our surroundings have been too utterly unlike. . . . If two beings are to understand each other always, and to be united by an unchangeable love, their characters as children must have been formed by a similar education, they must have the same beliefs, the same turn of mind, even the same manners and habits. But we, the distressed offspring of a turbulent and corrupt society, which behaves to her disunited children like a stepmother, and is more cruel in her periods of savagery than actual savages are, how can we wonder, after such great outward divisions, at the perpetual divisions of hearts and the impossibility of inward harmony."

Obviously George Sand is considerably less persuaded than Schleiermacher of the probability or possibility of the individual's meeting with that "right one," love for whom perfects. Jacques says: "I am still persuaded that marriage is one of the most barbarous institutions of society. I doubt not that it will be abolished when the human race makes further progress towards justice and reason; a more human and not less sacred tie will take its place and will ensure the well-being of the children without fettering the freedom of the parents. But as yet men are too barbarous and women too cowardly to demand a nobler law than the iron one by which they are now ruled. Beings destitute of conscience and virtue need heavy chains. The improvements of which some generous spirits dream, cannot be realised in such an age as ours; these spirits forget that they are a hundred years in advance of their contemporaries, and that before they change the law, they must change mankind." Jacques says to his bride on their wedding day: "Society is about to dictate an oath to you. You are about to swear to be faithful and

obedient to me, that is to say, never to love any one but me, and to obey me in all things. One of these vows is an absurdity, the other a disgrace."

The idea expressed by George Sand in all these books is, that to preserve the outward semblance of love, by caresses, &c., after it has ceased to exist, is what constitutes real immorality in love. Jacques says: "I have never forced my imagination to rekindle or reanimate a feeling in my soul which I no longer found there. I have never looked upon love as a duty, constancy as a rôle. When I have felt that love was extinguished in my soul I have said so, without being either ashamed or conscience-stricken." And *Lucrezia Floriani* says, still more emphatically: "Not one of all the passions to which I have yielded naïvely and blindly, seemed to me so guilty as the one which I was endeavouring, contrary to my feeling, to make lasting."

The French authoress looks upon unchangeable love for one and the same person as a possibility only, dependent upon certain conditions; and her idea of love is not, like Schleiermacher's, that it is the highest educational force, but that, as an irresistible natural force, a possessing passion, it is beautiful, the most beautiful thing in life. Institutions must adapt themselves to it, since it cannot change its nature to suit institutions. A disciple of Rousseau, she champions the cause of nature.

Let us now glance at one of the works of a contemporary English writer of the same tendencies, at Shelley's *Queen Mab*. In the notes he has appended to this poem we come upon a third variation of the opposition to prevailing opinions. Shelley says: "Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve. . . . A husband and wife ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation

of the right of private judgment should that law be considered which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind. And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object. . . . Love is free: to promise for ever to love the same woman is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed. . . . The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to one whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner or the welfare of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their children takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents ; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humour, violence, and falsehood. . . . The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse: they indulge without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, when they know that their victim is without appeal. . . . Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder. . . . Has a woman obeyed the instincts of unerring nature (*sic !*), society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals ; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease: yet *she* is in fault, *she* is the criminal, and society the pure and virtuous

matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! . . . Young men, excluded by the fanatical idea of chastity from the society of modest and accomplished women, associate with these vicious and miserable beings. . . . Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality ; it strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolise according to law. A system could not well have been devised more studiously hostile to human happiness than marriage. I conceive that from the abolition of marriage the fit and natural arrangement of sexual intercourse would result. I by no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary, it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. . . . In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image, should she look in the mirror of nature!"

Here again we have appeals to nature ; but the standpoint is an entirely different one. Shelley, the enthusiastic atheist, attributes the principal miseries of social humanity to traditional religion. "Unerring" nature is the divinity he substitutes for the God of the Bible. He considers that man has the right to demand happiness, and, like a true Englishman, contends, without troubling much about the psychology of the matter, for the freedom of the individual from the compulsion of external law. Schleiermacher warns against what is *foolish*, because, once the foolish step is taken, it is binding ; but he, the Protestant pastor, only indirectly incites to revolt. George Sand rebels against what is *dishonourable*. In the ethical creed of the French authoress honour plays the same part that wisdom does in Schleiermacher's ; it is by the mouth of Jacques, her ideal of manly honour, that she protests in the name of the honour of

humanity. Shelley stands forth as the champion of personal liberty ; it is *thraldom* that he desires to abolish. The English apostle of liberty, soon to be an exile, unhesitatingly attacks the institutions of society. George Sand never directly attacked marriage. She actually says in the introduction to *Mauprat:* "It is husbands I have attacked, and if I am asked what I propose to substitute for them, I answer —marriage." But Shelley, who takes cognisance of all evils from the social and political standpoint, proposes to improve humanity by legislation, being persuaded that the state is bound to secure as much liberty of action as possible to the individual as citizen.

It is obvious that, of these three representatives of the same idea, Schleiermacher is the most profound thinker and the most reserved. In his estimation character is of the first importance, in George Sand's, the heart, and in Shelley's, happiness. These three great writers are the spokesmen of three great nations, and by comparing them we are better able to understand the character of the whole movement which begins at the beginning of the century, but which can neither settle into shape nor produce good and tranquillising results until the intellectual and social emancipation of woman has advanced so far that she is independent of social prejudices, knows her own needs, and is in a position to supply them.

IX

WACKENRODER: ROMANTICISM AND MUSIC

In his *Letters on Lucinde*, Schleiermacher, the high-minded and honourable, brought all his intelligence to bear upon the task of finding something complete, something sensible, in the book. He read his personal opinions into it. But his position was a false one. He was trying, by means of the discussion of an unreal book, to settle a real question, trying to base a freer, higher moral code upon a work which, instead of doing what it professed to do, namely, proving the possibility of transforming life into poetry, simply retailed the fantastic performances of a few talented individuals, interspersing reflections on the poetry in a wild, extravagant reality.

Lucinde was hollow at the core. And this hollow, empty idealism is a feature common to all the many ramifications of Romanticism. Goethe's Prometheus cries to Zeus: "Didst thou imagine that I would loathe life, that I would flee into the wilderness, because all my dream-blossoms did not mature?" Thus speaks a Prometheus, thus a Goethe. But it was only natural that this emotional, inactive young generation should produce a group of authors who, just because "all their dream-blossoms did not mature," in desperate dissatisfaction with reality grasped at empty air and pursued shadows, which they obstinately persisted in trying to endow with corporeal existence, maintaining that art and poetry and their element and organ, imagination, are alone essential and living, but that all else (in other words, real life) is, as vulgar prose, meaningless, nay evil, in the eyes of genius.[1]

And yet the earliest preachers of this new doctrine were

[1] Hettner, *Die romantische Schule*, 48.

far from being wild or defiant. The first countenance which meets our gaze is, on the contrary, peculiarly gentle, one of the purest and mildest in all modern literature—the pale, noble face of Wackenroder.

The Romantic enthusiasm for art first found expression in a delicate little work from the pen of an ardent youth, whose life was shortened by the conflict between his burning desire to live for art, and the obligation laid upon him by his father to pursue a practical calling. He died, his powers entirely exhausted, in his twenty-fifth year. His life was like the mild, gentle breeze, which on a day in the early spring warms the air, and tempts forth the first flowers. His letters to Tieck, who was his intimate friend, and for whom he had an unbounded admiration, reveal an almost girlish affection for that more virile and notable man.

In every library of any importance one is sure to find a small, beautifully printed and bound book, published in 1797, entitled *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* ("Heart Outpourings of an Art-Loving Friar"). The author's name is not given. As vignette there is a head of Raphael, who, with the great eyes, full lips, and slender neck given him in this portrait, looks like some highly intellectual Christian devotee of Venus, far advanced in consumption. The inscription below the picture is not simply Raphael, but "the divine Raphael," *i.e.* the Raphael of the Romanticists. This dainty little book is, as it were, the primary cell of the whole Romantic structure; round it the later productions group themselves. Though not the offspring of a vigorous creative power, its germinative force proved wonderfully great. It is a book which contains nothing but ivy-like, twining ideas, nothing but passive impressions; but the wax upon which these impressions are stamped is so pure that the impressions are firm and clear. The title does not mislead; the author pours out his heart in a stream of fervent and religious enthusiasm for art, giving expression to a few simple ideas in a simple, untheoretical manner. The book is not the product of a great or epoch-making mind; but it has one great virtue, it is original. To the Friar the only allowable attitude towards art is that of devotion; great artists

are in his eyes blessed, holy saints. His admiration for them is that of an adoring child.

More than once in the course of the book Tieck has collaborated with Wackenroder; but the simple autobiography of the young musician, Joseph Berglinger, is entirely Wackenroder's work. The delicate refinement of Berglinger's character reminds us of Joseph Delorme, the fictitious personage in whom the young, Romantic, Sainte-Beuve described himself. Berglinger is Wackenroder. Like Wackenroder he opposes the determination of his father that he is not to become an artist, and simultaneously carries on an even harder struggle with himself in the matter of his position towards art. What troubles him is a fear, which curiously enough meets young Romanticism here on the very threshold, like the shadow of its fate, the fear of being incapacitated for real life by too entire absorption in art. Rückert has given masterly expression to the idea in the following lines:—

> "Die Kinder, lieber Sohn, der Gaukelschwertverschlucker
> In Madras üben sich nicht an Confekt und Zucker,
> Von Bambus lernen sie die Spitzen zu verschlingen,
> Um wachsend in der Kunst es bis zum Schwert zu bringen.
> Willst Du als Mann das Schwert der Wissenschaft verdaun,
> Musst Du als Jüngling nicht Kunstzuckerbrödchen kaun."[1]

Joseph expresses it thus: Art is a tempting, forbidden fruit; he who has once tasted its sweet, innermost juice is irrevocably lost to the acting, living world. The soul which art has enervated is perplexed and helpless face to face with reality. Joseph himself is only delivered from this distressing mental condition when glorious music raises him high above the troubles of this earth. But he is at the mercy of his moods, and fittingly likens his soul to the "Æolian harp, whose strings vibrate to a breath that comes one knows not whence, and on which the changing breezes

[1] "The children of those Indian jugglers who swallow swords do not, my son, learn the art by gulping down confectionery; they are trained to swallow the sharp points of the bamboo, and by degrees arrive at swords. If it be your desire, as a man, to digest the sword of science, you must not, as a youth, feed on art confectionery."

play at will." Music was the art Wackenroder loved and understood best; in his posthumous *Fancies on the Subject of Art* he places it above all the others.

Wackenroder resembled Novalis in constitution, but had even less capacity for resistance to the storms of life. He was good-natured and credulous to a degree, with a genuine Romantic credulity, which saw mysteries and miracles everywhere. This inclination of his led to practical jokes being played upon him by his comrades—though they too were all more or less liable to hallucinations and disposed to put faith in miracles. An account of one such trick has been preserved, such an anecdote as only the biography of a Romanticist could supply. Indeed, to understand the theories of the Romanticists, it is necessary to see the men themselves in their everyday life and at their desks.—Wackenroder was a diligent student, and never willingly missed a lecture. Two of his less conscientious friends went to his room during the hour of a certain lecture, knowing that he would be absent, and tied a dog, in a sitting posture, to the chair in front of the writing-table. Both paws were carefully placed on a huge folio which lay open on the table. The clever animal, accustomed to such performances, sat quietly in this ludicrous position while the two friends hid in an adjoining room to watch the development of their plot. Returning earlier than usual to fetch some papers he had forgotten, Wackenroder stood motionless with astonishment, gazing at the dog and its learned occupation. Fearful of neglecting his duty, and unwilling to put an end to the marvellous apparition, he gently lifted his papers from the table and left the room. In the evening, no one else seeming inclined to talk, he suddenly broke the silence by saying impressively: "Friends, I must tell you a most marvellous thing. Our Stallmeister (the dog) can read." [1]

Does not this read like a scene from Tieck's *Puss in Boots* or Hoffmann's story of the dog Berganza? Do not these books, grotesquely unreal as they are, seem actual transcripts from the private lives of the Romanticists? In *Kater Murr*, the cat says: "Nothing in my master's room

[1] Köpke: *Tieck's Leben*, i. 177.

attracted me more than the writing-table, which was strewn with books, manuscripts, and all manner of remarkable instruments. I might call this table the magic circle into which I was irresistibly drawn, all the time feeling a kind of holy awe, which prevented me from at once yielding to my inclination. At last, one day, when my master was absent, I overcame my fear and sprang upon the table. What joy to sit in the midst of the papers and books and rummage about amongst them!" Then the cat dexterously opens a large book with its paws and endeavours to comprehend the printed signs. At the very moment, however, when it seems to feel a wonderful spirit taking possession of it, it is surprised by its master who, with the cry: "Confounded animal!" rushes at it with uplifted stick. But he immediately starts back, exclaiming: "Cat! cat! you are reading! Nay, that I may not and will not forbid. What a marvellous desire for knowledge you have been born with!"

Such a scene cannot strike us as unnatural in a purely fanciful tale, when we have learned what could happen in real life. We seem to see the rainbow of fantastic imagination stretching its arch over the whole Romantic movement, from its first mild, though earnest, herald to its last weird, mannered exponent, from Wackenroder to Hoffmann. When, in the Life of Tieck, we find innumerable records of similar hallucinations, we begin to suspect that there is nothing, however fantastic, to be found in the Romanticists' writings which their fevered vision did not persuade them that they saw in real life.

It is exceedingly interesting to observe, not only the influence which Wackenroder's moods and emotions exercise upon Tieck, but also the part which the latter, thus influenced, takes in Wackenroder's work. The first thing which strikes one is, that Tieck, hitherto able only during the emancipating moments of production to rouse himself out of dark, William Lovell-like moods and give his rich talent free play, learns from Wackenroder to believe in imagination and art as mighty powers in human life, thereby arriving at the only firm basis for a philosophy of life to which he ever attained. The second is, that he, the less independent spirit of the two,

following in Wackenroder's footsteps, accentuates all his tendencies, carrying them to wildly fantastic, yet natural conclusions.

It is in those portions of the *Herzensergiessungen* in which Tieck collaborated, that the Roman Catholic tendency appears undisguisedly. It was Tieck who made the painter Antonio worship, not art alone, but also "the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Apostles"; and Tieck's is the dictum, that true love of art must be a "religious love or a beloved religion." But most remarkable of all as a biographical document is a letter, which, though repudiated by Tieck, was certainly written by him, the letter in which a young man, a disciple of Albert Dürer, who has come to Rome to study art, describes his conversion to Catholicism. It takes place in St. Peter's. "The sonorous Latin chants, which, rising and falling, penetrated the swelling waves of music like ships making their way through the waves of the sea, raised my soul higher and ever higher. When the music had pervaded my entire being and was flowing through all my veins, I roused myself from inward contemplation and looked around me, and the whole temple seemed to me to be alive, so intoxicated was I with the music. At this moment it ceased; a priest advanced to the high-altar, and with impressive gesture lifted high the Host in view of the assembled multitude. All sank upon their knees, and trumpets and I know not what mighty instruments crashed and boomed the spirit of adoration into my very soul. Then all at once it seemed to me as though that whole kneeling multitude were praying for the salvation of my soul, and I mingled my prayer with theirs."

This passage is of peculiar importance because it contains a conclusive proof (one overlooked by that most thorough of observers and critics, Hettner) that the tendency to Catholicism had its root in the very first principle of the Romantic movement. Both Hettner and Julian Schmidt attach too much importance to the fact that Schlegel, as an old man, in his well-known letter to a French lady, ascribes this Catholic tendency simply to a *prédilection d'artiste*. For the reason, the origin, of the artistic predilection is to be found in the original revulsion from the rational.

But the tendency in the direction of Catholicism was not the only one of Wackenroder's tendencies which was immediately seized upon and exaggerated by Tieck and his school. In the *Fantasien über die Kunst* Wackenroder praises music as the art of arts, the art which above all others is capable of condensing and preserving the emotions of the human heart, of teaching us "to feel feeling." What else, what more, did the Romanticists feel? This exactly suited Tieck. Wackenroder proclaims the superiority of music over poetry, and affirms that the language of music is the richer of the two. To whom could this appeal as much as to the man whose poems are rather an expression of the moods in which poetry is written than poetry itself, rather moods of art than works of art?

Tieck goes further than Wackenroder, and from music selects instrumental music as that in which alone art is really free, emancipated from all the restraints of the outer world. Hoffman too, musician as well as poet, calls instrumental music the most romantic of all the arts; and it may be mentioned as a striking instance of the coherence which invariably exists between the great intellectual phenomena of an age, as a proof of the fact that the Romanticists, with all their supposed and all their real independence and spontaneity, were unconsciously yielding to and following an inevitable general tendency, that it is just at this time that Beethoven emancipates instrumental music, and raises it to its highest development.

Enthusiasm for musical intensity and fervour having thus found its way into literature, Tieck soon arrives at the point of regarding emotional, melodious sound as the only true, the only pure poetry. His *Love Story of Fair Magelone* is a good example of this. Even in the prose portions of the tale everything rings and resounds — the hero's emotions and the landscape which serves as a background for them. The Count hears none of the sounds around him; for "the music within him drowned the rustling of the trees and the splashing of the fountains." But this inward music in its turn is drowned by the sweet strains of real instruments. "The music flowed like a murmuring brook, and

he saw the charm of the Princess come floating upon the silver stream, saw its waves kiss the hem of her garment. . . . Music was now the only movement, the only life in nature." Then the music dies away. "Like a stream of blue light" it disappears into the void; and forthwith the knight himself begins to sing.

In the "Garden of Poesy," of which we read in *Zerbino*, roses and tulips, birds and the azure of the skies, fountains and storms, streams and spirits, all sing. We read in *Bluebeard* that "the flowers kissed each other melodiously." In this literature everything has its music—the moonlight, scents, painting; and then on the other hand we read of the beams, the fragrance, and the shapes of music: "They sang with melodious throats, keeping time with the music of the moonbeams." The Romanticists had turned their backs upon material reality. Definite, corporeal form, nay, even a distinct representation of mental conditions was impossible to them. This was not what they aimed at. In their eyes tangibility was coarse and vulgar. Every distinct feature melts away in a sort of dissolving view. They are afraid of losing in profundity and infinity what they might possibly gain in restraint and plastic power.

All the masters of the school agree on this point. First and foremost we have Novalis. His *Hymns to Night*, and indeed all his lyrics, are night and twilight poetry, in the dusk of which no distinct outlines are possible. His psychological aim was, as he himself says, to fathom the nameless, unconscious powers of the soul. Therefore his æsthetic theory is, that language ought to become musical, to become song again; and he also maintains that in a poetical work there need be no unity except that of spirit, that unity of idea or action is unnecessary. "One can imagine," he says, "tales without more coherence than the different stages of a dream, poems which are melodious and full of beautiful words, but destitute of meaning or connection; at most, comprehensible stanzas here and there, like fragments of perfectly unrelated things. This true poetry can of course only have a general allegorical significance and an indirect effect, like music."

How entirely this harmonises with the theories of Friedrich Schlegel! Schlegel, whose nature was a series of moods, who had not strength of will to carry out any plan, whose own career resembles an arabesque beginning with a thyrsus and ending with a cross composed of a knife and fork, says: "The arabesque, the simple musical swaying of the line itself, is the oldest, the original form in which human imagination takes shape. Its contours are no more definite than those of the clouds in the evening sky."

The saying is apt when applied, not to imagination in general, but to the imagination of the Romanticists. Tieck's lyrics resemble Goethe's as the clouds on the horizon resemble snow-clad mountains. Our attitude to the lyric poetry of the Romanticists resembles that of Polonius to the cloud: "Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?—By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.—Methinks it is like a weasel.—It is backed like a weasel.—Or like a whale?—Very like a whale." In Novalis, in the poems at any rate, we have still tangible, distinct artistic form, in Tieck's writings everything floats in a sort of mist or vapour of form supposed to correspond to the mysterious, expectant fervour of the theme. The work of art is stayed and fixed in its first, embryonic, vapour-ball stage. This elementary product of the imagination is designated primitive poetry. In order to reduce clearly defined poetic art once more to primeval poetry, all definite forms must be dissolved and kneaded together. Tieck preferred those works of the great poets which they wrote before their style was developed, or which they chose to leave tolerably formless (he confesses that not one of Shakespeare's plays produced such an impression on him as *Pericles*, only part of which is genuine), and he himself, following in the track of *Pericles*, produced such works as *Genoveva* and *Octavian*, in which the epic, lyric, and dramatic styles are all minced up together.

This medley of styles was adopted in Denmark. It was well suited to the subject of Oehlenschläger's *St. Hans Aften Spil* and fairly so to that of his *Aladdin;* sometimes

it produced very unsuccessful results, as in the case of Hauch's *Hamadryaden*.

So great is Tieck's formlessness, so impossible is it to him (in his Romantic period) to condense, that he is inefficient even in pure lyric poetry. He may talk much of music and of the music of words, but he is wanting in the gift of rhythm; he does not seem to have had a correct ear. A. W. Schlegel was infinitely Tieck's superior in this respect, as is proved by his admirable translations of the songs in *As You Like It*. But of Tieck and most of the Romanticists it is true that, in spite of all their talk of melodious style, they themselves were only melodious when they reverted to those southern measures, to the exact rules of which they were obliged to conform. They filled in the framework of sonnet and canzonet as ladies fill in with embroidery an outline designed upon canvas, crowding in rhymes in such superabundance that the meaning was often swamped by them. Tieck writes in *Magelone*:—

"Errungen,
Bezwungen
Von Lieb ist das Glück,
Verschwunden
Die Stunden,
Sie fliehen zurück;
Und selige Lust
Sie stillet,
Erfüllet
Die trunkene, wonneklopfende Brust."

In Baggesen's *Faust* we find the following rather overdone parody of this Romantic jingle:—

"Mit Ahnsinn Wahnsinn, lächelndweinend,
Einend—
Mit Schiefe, Tiefe, dunkelmeinend,
Scheinend—
Der Enge Läng' entflammt in weiten Breiten,
Muss licht der Dichter durch die Zeiten gleiten."

And it was not only metres that the Romanticists borrowed from the Spaniards and Italians, but all kinds of technical tricks. They naïvely set to work to produce a lyrical

picture with the assistance of assonances and tragic vowel sounds. Every vowel and consonant in the alphabet was pressed into the service in turn. Forty sonorous *a*'s in succession are supposed to induce a cheerful frame of mind in the reader, and a score or so of sombre, mournful *u*'s make his flesh creep. Take as an example Tieck's melancholy U-Romance of old Sir Wulf, who is carried off by the devil. In it he goes the length of using *begunnte* instead of *begann* for the sake of tragic effect. When the reader's nerves have been narcotised for half-an-hour by such terminations as Unke—Sturme—hinunter—begunnte—verdunkeln—verschlungen—Wulfen—Münze gulden—grossen Kluften—rucke, Drucke—thuen, Zunften—lugen—bedunken—erschluge—anhube—mit tiefen Brunsten—vielen Unken, die heulten und wunken—zu dem Requiem des todten Wulfen, den der dunkle Satan mit vielen Wunden—erschluge—when nothing but u-tu-tu is sounding in his ears, he has reached the climax, language has become music, and he floats off on the stream of an emotional mood. It is in drama that this vowel-music is most comical. In Friedrich Schlegel's *Alarkos*, that arsenal of assonances and alliterations, the hero sometimes for two or three pages in succession ends every line with the same vowel :—

> " Ihr Männer all', Pilaster dieser alten Burg,
> Genossen, Tapfre ! die umkränzt mein Ritterthum,
> Dess Glorie wir oft neu gefärbt mit hoher Lust
> In unsres kühnen Herzens eignem heissen Blut—
> Die alte Ehr' in tiefer Brust, der lichte Ruhm,
> Dem festen Aug' in Nacht der einzig helle Punkt,
> So folgten Einem Stern wir all' vereint im Bund ;
> Der Bund ist nun zerschlagen durch den herben Fluch,
> Der mich im Strudel fortreisst fremd' und eigner Schuld.—
> Mich zwingt, von hier zu eilen, ein geheimer Ruf,
> Nach fernen Orten muss ich in drei Tagen, muss
> Ein gross Geschäft vollenden, und die Frist ist kurz."

And on it goes—Burg, Lust, Muth, Schutz, Kund, Brust, Furcht, und, Ruhms, thun, Bund, uns, &c., &c. One derives quite as much satisfaction from the assonances alone as from the complete lines. When *Alarkos* was performed

in Weimar and the audience burst into uproarious laughter, Goethe rose from his place in the stalls, cried in a voice of thunder: "Man lache nicht!" and signalled to the police that all who continued to laugh were to be turned out. We who read *Alarkos* now, are thankful that no one has the right to turn us out.

The reason why the Romanticists subjected themselves to all this metrical restraint is not far to seek. These compulsory, cold metres exactly suit writers in whom metrical skill is combined with a complete lack of inventive power. But *terza rima*, *ottava rima*, and sonnets are an insufficient disguise for the formlessness of their matter. When the mist is so thick that it can be cut with a knife, the Romanticists cut it into fourteen pieces and call it a sonnet.

In the unrestricted metres, formlessness and prosiness reach a climax. What, for instance, can be said for such lines as the following, from Tieck's *Römische Reise?*—

"Weit hinter uns liegt Rom,
Auch mein Freund ist ernst,
Der mit mir nach Deutschland kehrt,
Der mit allen Lebens Kräften
Sich in alte und neue Kunst gesenkt,
Der edle Rumohr,
Dess Freundschaft ich in mancher kranken Stunde
Trost und Erheiterung danke."[1]

That well-known drastic critic of the Romanticists, Arnold Ruge, supplied an appendix to this, which runs:—

"Hochgeehrter Herr Hofrath!
Dieser unmittelbaren Lyrik,
Das verzeihn Sie gütigst, weiss ich
Mit dem besten Willen,
Sowohl in alter als in neuer Poesie,

[1] "Far behind us lies Rome.
My friend too is grave,
The friend who returns with me to Germany,
After devoting all his powers
To the study of ancient and modern art—
The noble Rumohr,
To whose friendship I have owed comfort and cheer
In many a suffering hour."

Nichts zur Seite zu stellen,
Als etwa diesen
Schwachen Versuch einer freien Nachbildung."[1]

But the attempt to make away with language in favour of music reaches a climax when Tieck goes so far as to endow music itself, or musical instruments, with the power of speech. Occasionally the result is comical, as in *Sternbald* (first edition), where the instruments all talk, the flute saying :—

"Unser Geist ist himmelblau,
Führt Dich in die blaue Ferne.
Zarte Klänge locken Dich,
Ein Gemisch von andern Tönen.
Lieblich sprechen wir hinein,
Wenn die andern munter singen,
Deuten blaue Berge, Wolken,
Lieben Himmel sänftlich an,
Wie der letzte leise Grund
Hinter grünen frischen Baümen."[2]

This train of thought received its most classic expression in the poem with which *Phantasus* ends, the theme of which is, in the manner of Calderon, repeated with innumerable variations :—

"Liebe denkt in süssen Tönen,
Denn Gedanken stehn zu fern,
Nur in Tönen mag sie gern
Alles, was sie will, verschönen.

Drum ist ewig uns zugegen,
Wenn Musik mit Klängen spricht,

---

[1] "Honoured Herr Hofrath !
I pray you to excuse me, but,
With the best will in the world
I cannot find,
In ancient or in modern poetry,
Anything to match this lyric outburst
Except perhaps
My own weak imitation of the same."

[2] "Our spirit, which is azure blue, transports thee to blue distances. Sweet tones allure thee, a mingling of many sounds. When the others sing bravely, we chime sweetly in, telling softly of blue mountains, clouds, fair skies ; we are like the faint, clear background behind fresh green leaves."

Ihr die sprache nicht gebricht,
Holde Lieb' auf allen Wegen ;
Liebe kann sich nicht bewegen,
Leihet sie den Odem nicht." [1]

This superhuman love, which differs from ordinary human love in being unable to employ language as an organ, finds absolutely appropriate expression in music ; language is only employed to condemn itself and to declare that it cedes its place to music. To such a degree of subtlety and ultra-refinement does the Romantic spirit gradually lead.

The next step is that which Tieck takes in his comedy, *Die verkehrte Welt* ("The Topsy-Turvy World"), namely, the employing of language exclusively on account of its musical qualities. To this comedy there is prefixed as overture a symphony, which, in its essentially musical vagueness, displays really classic originality. Music had never been paraphrased into words in this manner before; hence the experiment is to this day regarded as distinctly typical. The man who has the courage to carry his madness to its final consequence, by doing so endows this madness, in which there is method, with living vigour.

SYMPHONY

Andante in D Major.

"If we desire to enjoy ourselves, it is not of so much consequence how we do it, as that we really do it. From gravity we turn to gaiety ; then, weary of gaiety, return to gravity ; but let us observe ourselves too closely, in either case have our aim too constantly in view, and there's an end as well to real seriousness as to unaffected gaiety."

Piano.

"But are reflections such as these appropriate in a symphony? Why begin so sedately? No! no indeed! I will rather at once set all the instruments to play together."

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[1] "Love thinks in melodious sounds ; thoughts are too far to seek ; 'tis with sweet sounds it beautifies its longings. Therefore love is ever present with us when sweet music speaks ; it needs no language, but is helpless till it borrows the voice of music."

Crescendo.

"I have only to will, but to will with intelligence; for the storm does not rise all at once, in a moment; it announces itself, it grows, thus awaking sympathy, awe, fear, and joy; otherwise it would but occasion empty amazement and fright. It is difficult to read at sight, how much more difficult, then, to hear at sight. But now we are right in the midst of the tumult. Bang, ye kettle-drums! Trumpets, crash!"

Fortissimo.

"Ha! the turmoil, the onslaughts, the desperate strife of sounds! Whither are ye rushing? Whence do ye come? They plunge like heroes into the thickest of the fray; these fall, and expire; those return, wounded and faint, seeking consolation and friendship. Hark, the galloping, snorting horses! The organ rolls, like thunder among the mountains. There is a rush and a roar as when a cataract, despairingly seeking its own destruction, flings itself over the naked ledge and rages down, deeper and ever deeper down, into the bottomless abyss."

. . . . . .

Violino Primo Solo.

"What! It is not permissible, not possible, to think in sounds, and to make music in words and thoughts? Were it so, how hard would be the fate of us artists! What poor language, and still poorer music! Do ye not think many thoughts so delicate, so spiritual, that in despair they take refuge in music, there at last to find rest? How often does a whole day spent in racking thought leave nought behind but a buzz and a hum, which time alone changes into melody?"

. . . . . .

Forte.

All is in order, the stage is arranged, the prompter in his place, the audience has arrived. Expectation is aroused, curiosity stirred; but few think of the end of the piece, and how they will then say, "Was it anything out of the ordinary?" Give good heed! You must, or 'twill all be confusion. Yet be not too eager, lest you should see and hear more than is meant! Hear and give heed! But give heed as you ought! O hark! Hark! Hark!! Hark!!![1]

One sees that Kierkegaard, in his well-known essay on *Don Juan* (in the concluding chorus of which we seem to hear the footsteps of the Commandant—"Hör, hör, hör Mozart's

[1] Tieck, v. 285.

Don Juan!"), is merely going a little farther in the direction indicated by Tieck; and it is very evident how close the relation is between Tieck's first conception of the romantic ideal and Hoffmann's transformations of music into the emotional outbursts and weird visions of *Kreisleriana*.

But Hoffmann, who possessed such great and original musical gifts that he can hardly be considered an author pure and simple, but must be treated as a poet-musician, was far more in earnest than Tieck in this matter of making music in words. He lived and moved and had his being in music; he was as fertile a composer as he was an author, and many of his writings are fantasies on the subject of music or of the great composers. When ill he was wont, in his feverish wanderings, to confuse his attendants with musical instruments. Of one who had a soft, languishing voice, he said: "I have been tormented to-day by the flute." Of another, with a deep bass voice: "That insufferable bassoon has been plaguing me the whole afternoon."

When he introduces Gluck into his *Fantasiestücke*, he makes him speak of the intervals as if they were living beings. "Once again it was night. Two giants in shining cuirasses rushed upon me—the Keynote and the Fifth! They seized me, but their eyes beamed mildly on me: 'I know what fills thy breast with longing; that gentle, winning youth, the Third, will soon appear among the giants.'" Kreisler too is made to talk of stabbing himself with a gigantic Fifth. What in the other Romanticists is fantastic sentimentality, in Hoffmann becomes weird burlesque.

In the sketch entitled *Kreisler's musikalisch poetischer Klub*, he gives to the characteristic qualities of certain notes the names of colours, and thereby produces a picture of a connected series of mental impressions. He had the keen perception peculiar to certain delicately organised, nervous temperaments, of the relationship which undoubtedly exists between sounds and colours.

As an example of Hoffmann's advance on Tieck's attempts to express pure music in words, note the passage which describes how, after Kreisler has played, a marvellous rush of magnificent chords and runs is heard within

the pianoforte itself. There is a genuinely Romantic blending of the impressions of the different senses in the attempt made to give some idea of this music: "Its fragrance shimmered in flaming, mysteriously interwoven circles." On this follows a representation, in emotional language, of the various keys and chords, a thing hitherto unattempted.

Chord of A Flat Minor (*mezzo forte*).

"Ah!—they bear me away to the land of eternal longing; but as they lay hold of me, anguish awakes and rends my breast."

E Major Sixth (*ancora piu forte*).

"Stand steadfast, my heart! Break not, struck by the scorching ray that has pierced my breast. Be of good courage, my soul! Mount high into the element which gave thee birth and is thy home!"

E Major Third (*forte*).

"They have crowned me with a glorious crown, but the sparkles and flashes of its diamonds are the thousand tears I have shed, and in its gold gleam the flames that have consumed me. Courage and power, confidence and strength befit him who is called to reign in the spiritual realm."

A Minor (*harpeggiando dolce*).

"Why wouldst thou flee, lovely maiden? Thou canst not, for thou art held fast by invisible bands. Nor canst thou tell what it is that has taken up its abode in thy breast. 'Tis like a gnawing pain, yet it makes thee tremble with joy. But thou wilt know all when I talk to thee fondly in that spirit language which I can speak and thou canst understand. . . ."

E Flat Major (*forte*).

"Follow him! follow him! His raiment is green like the green of the forest; the sweet tones of the horn echo in his wistful words! List to the rustling in the bushes, list to the horn blasts, full of rapture and pain! It is he! Let us hasten to meet him!"

Then finally we have the parody of all this in *Kater Murr*, where Hoffmann reproduces caterwauling in verse, a glossary of the different sounds being provided.

It is in this entirely musical poetry that Wackenroder's idea of art attains to its truest and highest expression. The vigorous pantheism which in Goethe's case is plastic, and finds

expression in the creation of the *Diana der Epheser*, here becomes musical. In all Tieck's early works, with their piety, their sensuality, their reminiscences of Wackenroder and of Goethe, we feel the rush of a strong, broad wave of Romantic pantheism. In *Sternbald*, for example, he writes: "We often listen intently and peer into the future, in eager expectation of the new phenomena that will soon pass before us in motley, magic garb. At such times we feel as if the mountain stream were trying to sing its melody more clearly, as if the tongues of the trees were loosened, that their rustling might be to us intelligible song. Soon the flute-like notes of love are heard in the distance; our hearts beat high at his coming; time stands still as if arrested by a magic word; the shining moments dare not flee. We are enclosed, as it were, in a magic circle of melody, and rays of a new, transfigured existence penetrate like mysterious moonlight into our actual life." And again: "O impotent Art! how stammering and childish are thine accents compared with the full swelling organ tones that well forth from the inmost depths, from mountain and valley, forest and stream! I hear, I feel how the eternal World Spirit sweeps all the strings of the terrible harp with constraining fingers, how all the most diverse forms are born of his playing and speed throughout nature upon spirit wings. My little human heart in wild enthusiasm takes up the contest and fights itself weary and faint in its rivalry with the highest. . . . The eternal melody, jubilant and exultant, storms past me."

Both life and poetry are here resolved into music.

In all ages, and in every domain of art, the artist has at times been tempted to display his mastery over his material by defying it while using it. In the history of sculpture came a period when, irritated by the heaviness of stone, sculptors endeavoured to compel it to express lightness and airiness; or else, like the mannerists of the rococo period, imitated the art of the painter. In like manner the Romanticists would fain have language regarded only as a thing akin to music; their endeavour is to use words more for their sound than their meaning. They tried to make word-music, much as the prose authors of our own day try, with more or less

success, to make word-pictures. It is not difficult to see what led to this particular crotchet. Their antipathy to purpose, their devotion to irony, naturally induced the desire not to be bound by, not to be responsible for, their words. They use them ironically, in such a manner that they can retract them. They will not have them standing solidly before them, indicating an aim, a purpose. Just as, by conceiving of liberty as licence, they succeeded in returning to a point where it was possible for them to do this, or to do that, as the fancy took them, so they succeeded, by conceiving of language simply as sound, in making it the vehicle of emotion without tendency, that is, without relation to life and action. They did not really escape tendency ; that is an impossibility ; but, as theirs was not the tendency upwards and onwards, they gravitated downwards and backwards. And, since they were perpetually compelling words to declare themselves incompetent and to abdicate in favour of music, it was only natural that the musical composers also, influenced by the spirit of the times, should endeavour to express the Romantic ideal in their art, with those means to which the poets in their impotence had constantly attempted to recur.

Tieck's dramatised fairy-tales, of which *Bluebeard* may be taken as a specimen, have a great resemblance to opera libretti. The fantastic, legend-like productions of the Romanticists are, indeed, precisely the sort of thing demanded by opera. There would have been a future for Tieck as a writer of opera libretti. As a matter of fact, he only wrote one, and that one was never set to music. The theories of Romanticism nevertheless found due expression in music. E. T. A. Hoffmann represents the transition from Romantic authorship to Romantic musical composition. As an operatic composer, he is not only the musical interpreter of Calderon, the poet of past days most admired by the Romanticists, but also collaborates fraternally with contemporary Romanticists. He writes music for Brentano's *Die lustige Musikanten* and Zacharias Werner's *Das Kreuz an der Ostsee*, and bases an excellent three-act opera on Fouqué's *Undine*.

As an operatic writer he is, however, less the musical genius than the gifted translator of poetry into the language

of music. In the opinion of the most competent judges, he was only thoroughly successful with subjects which harmonised with his own literary leaning to the terrible and the supernatural. We have him at his best, for instance, in the songs of the wild, inhuman Teutons in *Das Kreuz an der Ostsee*, with their expression of untamable passions, and in the fairy tale-like, supernatural scenes of *Undine*, which produce a feeling of agreeable eeriness.

No less an authority than Karl Maria von Weber bestowed hearty praise upon the last-mentioned opera. And Weber himself is, beyond comparison, the greatest of the composers who succeeded in giving expression in music to the Romantic theory of art. In his choice of themes he follows closely in the track of the Romanticists. In *Preciosa* the joys of a free, vagabond life are extolled, just as they are in Tieck's *Franz Sternbald* and Eichendorff's *Leben eines Taugenichts* ("Life of a Ne'er-Do-Well"). In *Oberon* we are transported into the fairy world of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the play which served as the point of departure for all Tieck's fantastic comedies. And in *Der Freischütz*, Weber, like the Romanticists in their later periods, has recourse to the popular in his art, makes use of national, popular melodies, just as the Romanticists of Germany and Denmark made use of national, popular songs, and, like them, introduces popular traditions and superstitions. No one witnessing a performance of *Der Freischütz* in a German theatre could be for a moment in doubt, even though he were deaf, of its being a Romantic opera. He sees the gloomy ravine where the spirits of nature dwell, the weird moonlight dance (scenes that remind one of the temptations of St. Anthony in old Dutch paintings), and, finally, the wild chase in which, with a marvellously illusive effect, shadows projected by a species of magic lantern pursue each other through the air. But to the listening connoisseur the real interest lies in the attitude of the composer to all these external conditions. He feels that Weber treats his subject much as the Romanticists do theirs, only with greater genius. He too drives his art to one of its extremes. Just as the Romanticists are inclined to conceive of speech as only sound

and rhythm, he is inclined to treat music as if it were simply rhythm. Samiel's *Motiv*, for example, is more rhythmic than melodic, and consequently produces a coarser, more realistic, but also more picturesque effect. The Romanticists write musical poetry; Weber composes pictorial music. While Beethoven presents us with a purely psychological picture, represents nothing tangible, nothing but his own soul, Weber gives us physical characterisation. He always relies upon unmistakable outward phenomena, on something of which his audience already have a preconceived idea, as, for instance, fairies. Except in the Pastoral Symphony, Beethoven only paints the impression; Weber paints the thing itself. He imitates the sounds of nature. He makes the violins moan to represent the moaning of the trees; the rising of the moon is announced and depicted by a chord. When he gives us a rhythmic succession of non-resonant beats instead of waves of sound, *i.e.* makes a perfectly arbitrary abstract use of the vehicle of his art; when he confines himself to song and the simplest of harmonies, *i.e.* elects to be naïve and popular; or when, in order to obtain a grotesque, wild, or spectral effect, he gives instruments parts which lie outside their natural province and compass (for instance deep tones to the clarinets), *i.e.* employs the mediums of his art in a more strange and eccentric manner than they had ever been employed before—in all these cases he is a thorough-going Romanticist, one who, with his greater genius and far more suitable medium, supplies the shortcomings of which we are invariably conscious in the works of the Romantic poets.[1]

[1] Cf. George Sand: Introduction to *Mouny Robin*.

X

ATTITUDE OF ROMANTICISM TO ART AND NATURE

WACKENRODER'S book, which, as it were, indicates the attitude of Romanticism to music, also indicates what its attitude is to be towards art. Just as Winckelmann, with his first enthusiastic writings, had awakened the desire to study antique art, now Wackenroder enlists men's sympathies for medievalism.

In his naïve enthusiasm he begins by translating and paraphrasing those portions of Vasari's old biographies of the famous painters which describe the greatness and nobility of mind of the Italian masters. Amongst others he extols Leonardo; but he neither grasps the characteristics of the man nor gives us intelligent criticism of his art; he simply eulogises him under the heading: *Das Muster eines kunstreichen und dabei tiefgelehrten Malers, vorgestellt in dem Leben des Leonardo da Vinci* (The Gifted and Erudite Painter, as exemplified in the Life of Leonardo da Vinci). The essay begins with the following impulsive assertion: "The period of the resurrection of the art of painting in Italy produced men to whom the generation of to-day should look up as to glorified saints." The fact, actually chronicled by Vasari, that the great painters of the Italian Renaissance led singularly unsaintly lives, is entirely ignored. In its very germ the Romantic conception of art is poisoned by the reaction towards sentiment. The critic folds his hands to worship, and forgets to open his eyes to see.

Amongst the translated fragments Wackenroder introduces a short original essay, entitled *Longing for Italy*, in which we have the first appearance of that enthusiasm for Italy which afterwards becomes not only general, but almost obligatory. Love and longing for Italy was nothing new in Germany. Goethe's

father, who was no enthusiast, had known this feeling; but now idolatry of an Italy which had no resemblance to the real one became a necessary clause in the creed of every genuine Romanticist. In poetry the longing for Italy found expression in a profusion of lyrical poems, dilutions and attenuations of that divine song of Mignon's, which is a picture as well as a poem. Mignon is content with saying: "Die Myrthe *still* und *hoch* der Lorbeer steht"; the Romantic poets express themselves in superlatives. The Italy of literature in general may perhaps be best and most briefly defined as the Italy of Leopold Robert (though even this definition is too exact), a country which never existed on any map but that of the Romanticists. The real Italy, with its bright colours and its cheerful life, is not to be found. Colour is replaced by ideal forms; movement is petrified, that it may not disturb an interplay of beautiful waving lines. To the Romanticists Italy became what Dulcinea was to Don Quixote, an ideal of which they knew almost nothing beyond what was conveyed by a few general, vapid descriptive phrases. When a definite, real country is advanced to be the object of men's longings, the home of beauty, it gradually loses, in their depictions of it, all its real, living beauty. But it never was the real, living beauty of Italy which the later Romanticists loved; it was Italy as a ruin; it was Catholicism as a mummy; it was the dwarfed and stunted spirit of the people (Volksgeist), which, hermetically sealed up by a partly ignorant, partly ambitious and designing priesthood, has remained unenlightened and naïve. What they admired here, as elsewhere, was the feeble, lifeless poetry of a day that was dead and gone.

But this cult of Italy and of the pious, or seemingly pious Italian painters, is only the stepping-stone by which the "Friar" passes to the worship of his own particular idol, Albert Dürer. With his enthusiasm for this apostle of German art is combined enthusiasm for ancient Nuremberg. When Tieck and Wackenroder travelled together through Germany in 1793, Nuremberg was their chief place of pilgrimage. The oftener they saw the town, the more affection, nay devotion, did they conceive for it. "The art life of Germany

revealed itself to them there in all its fulness. That of which they had hitherto only divined the possibility, had here long been a living reality. How rich in monuments of all the arts was this town, with its churches of St. Sebald and St. Lorenz, its works by Albert Dürer, Vischer, and Krafft! Artistic feeling and ardent industry had here elevated handicraft to the rank of art. Every house was a monument of the past; every well, every bench, bore witness to the citizens of the quiet, simple, thoughtful life of their forefathers. No whitewash had as yet reduced the houses to uniformity. There they stood in all their stateliness, each with its carven imagery, borrowed from poem and legend. Ottnit, Siegenot, Dietrich, and other old heroes, were to be seen above the doors, guarding and protecting the home. Over the old imperial city, with its marvels and its oddities, hung a fragrance which in other places had long ago been blown away by the winds of political change and enlightenment."[1]

Nuremberg is, in very deed, a splendid old town, but it is easy to understand the special attraction there must have been for two budding Romanticists in its medievalism, its old Catholic churches, its old houses with the Nibelungen heroes above the doors. Their enthusiasm over the treasures of beautiful Nuremberg is, truth to say, far more natural than the long blindness of the eighteenth century to them. As to Lessing the word "Gothic" had simply meant "barbaric," so to Winckelmann the German Renaissance had been a closed book. Now the splendours of Nuremberg were gazed on by eager eyes. In a species of æsthetic intoxication the friends wandered round the churches and the churchyards; they stood by the graves of Albert Dürer and Hans Sachs; a vanished world rose before their eyes, and the life of ancient Nuremberg became to them the romance of art. The chapter in the *Herzensergüsse* entitled *In Memory of Albert Dürer* is the first-fruits of these sentiments, and at the same time an expression of the warm patriotic feeling of the young author. "In the days when Albert was wielding the brush, the German still played a distinctly characteristic and notable part on the stage of the

[1] Köpke: *Ludwig Tieck*, i. 139.

world ; and Dürer's pictures faithfully reproduce the serious, straightforward, strong German character, its spirit as well as its outward lineaments. In our days this vigorous German character has vanished, in art as well as in life. . . . The German art of those days was a pious youth, who had received a homely upbringing in a small town, amongst his relations—it has now become the conventional man of the world, who has lost the stamp of the small town, and along with it his originality."

Yet this patriotic feeling in art is not Wackenroder's fundamental feeling ; it is based upon a more comprehensive one. The little book inveighs throughout against all intolerance in art. Freedom from every compulsory rule, a freedom based upon deep and genuine love of beauty, is proclaimed in language which betrays the mimosa-like sensitiveness of this prophet of the new gospel of art. "He," says Wackenroder, "whose more sensitive nerves are keenly alive to the mysterious attraction which lies hidden in art, will often be deeply moved by what leaves another callous. He has the good fortune to have more frequent opportunities than other men for healthy mental excitement and activity."

Such excitement and activity were, as we have seen, most easily and most naturally called forth by the musical treatment of poetry and by music itself—much less naturally by clearly defined corporeal forms of art.

If our supposition that Wackenroder's theory of art finds its true and highest development in the distinctively musical type of poetry be correct, it is easy to foretell what will be the result of Tieck's determination to write (with the assistance of his friend's posthumous papers) a tale embodying the "Friar's" longings and theories. The letters written by the German painter in Rome to his friend in Nuremberg became the germ of the new art-romance, *The Wanderings of Franz Sternbald, a Story of Olden Germany.* The book takes its name from its hero, a painter of the days of Albert Dürer. The delineation of character is vague and weak ; the action is swamped in dialogue ; events play as freely and fantastically as in dreams (and of dreams we have any number) with the feeble talking figures who do

duty for heroes and heroines; and even the sequence of these events is constantly interrupted by the insertion of songs improvised to order, which may be best described by quoting a saying of Sternbald's friend, Florestan, namely, that it ought to be possible to construct in words and verse a whole conversation consisting of nothing but sound. When the thread of event is most attenuated and the silk of the verse most thinly spun, music proper is called in. The primitive strains of horn or pipe are so frequently introduced that the author himself in a later work, *Zerbino*, jests at this superfluity of horn music.

In one of Caroline Schlegel's letters we find Goethe's apt criticism of the book. He said that it ought by rights to have been called *Musical Wanderings;* that there was everything imaginable in it except a painter; that if it were intended for an art-romance, art should have received quite different and more comprehensive treatment; that there was no real substance in the book, and that its artistic tendency was an erroneous one; that there were beautiful sunsets in it, but that they were repeated too often. Much severer, however, and more penetrating is Caroline's own criticism. She writes: "As to Part First, I shall only say that I am still in doubt whether Tieck did not intend to represent Sternbald's devotion to art as something regrettable, a mistaken, fruitless devotion, like Wilhelm Meister's. If this be the case, then there is another fault, namely, the want of *human* interest in the story. Part Second throws no light on the matter. In it there is the same vagueness, the same want of power. One is always hoping for something decisive, always expecting Franz to make notable progress in one direction or another; but he never does. Once more we read of beautiful sunrises, the charms of spring, the alternation of day and night, the light of sun, moon, and stars, the singing of birds. It is all very charming, but there is a want of substance in it, and a certain paltriness both in Sternbald's moods and emotions and in the delineation of them. There are almost too many poems, and they have as little connection with each other as have the loosely strung together events and anecdotes, in

many of which latter, moreover, one detects all sorts of imitation."

But if there be no action in this book, what does it contain? Reflections—in the first instance upon art, in the second upon nature.

First we have endless meditations and quantities of aphorisms on art and poetry, interspersed with feeble lyric poems, which are hardly distinguishable one from the other. Only one among the number, a longish poem on Arion, is at all remarkable. It indicates the spirit of the book. The three leaders of Romanticism, A. W. Schlegel, Tieck, and Novalis, all sang the praises of Arion, and somewhat later he was hymned in Danish by P. L. Möller. It was natural that the hearts of the Romanticists should be stirred by the legend of the poet-subduer of nature, who roused the enthusiasm of the very monsters of the sea, rode upon dolphins, was invulnerable, invincible, of immortal fame. He was their symbol, their hero. All their poetry is, in a certain sense, an attempt to expound the legend of Arion; and what else are all the echoes and imitations of their works, the books which glorify poets, artists, actors, troubadours, heroic and irresistible tenors? The figure of Narcissus would be the fitting frontispiece for all these innumerable volumes.

As a matter of fact the main ingredients of *Sternbald* are trite refutations of the trite objection to art, that it is useless, trivial reasons for art being national ("since we are not Italians, and an Italian can never feel as a German does"), and hymns in praise of Albert Dürer. It is their admiration for Dürer that first brings the two lovers together, just as Werther and Lotte were first united by their common enthusiasm for Klopstock. The same ideas found expression in Danish in Sibbern's *Gabrielis* and Oehlenschläger's *Correggio*. Parts of the plot of *Correggio* are anticipated; we have, for instance, the artist painting his own wife as the Madonna, and his grief at having to part with his work. A long word-symphony in honour of Strasburg Cathedral is followed by bitter thrusts at the "uncouth masses of stone in Milan and Pisa, and that disjointed building, the Cathedral of Lucca." Then we have admiration and praise of Till

Eulenspiegel and Hans Wurst (these gentlemen being supposed to represent fancy and irony), and great enthusiasm for Dürer's stag with the cross between its antlers, and for the "simple-hearted, pious, and touching" manner in which the knight in front of it bends his knees. The picture in question is undoubtedly a beautiful, simple-minded production, but we cannot help smiling at the serious attempt made to prove that of all the ways in which the legs of a kneeling man can be bent, this is by far the most Christian.

Again and again the idea recurs that all true art must be allegorical, that is to say, marrowless and bloodless. Most of the poems are allegories. The principal one is the long allegory of Phantasus, wretched verse without one spark of imagination:

"Der launige Phantasus,
Ein wunderlicher Alter,
Folgt stets seiner närrischen Laune.
Sie haben ihn jetzt festgebunden,
Dass er nur seine Possen lässt,
Vernunft im Denken nicht stört,
Den armen Menschen nicht irrt," &c., &c.[1]

Reminiscences of this satire upon the attacks made on imagination by the prosaic are to be found here and there in Andersen's *Fairy Tales*. The poem, which is recited in the moonlight, indicates as an ideal subject for the painter a pilgrim in the moonlight, the emblem of humanity: "For what are we but wandering, erring pilgrims? Can aught but the light from above illumine our path?" There are distinct traces of this same tendency in our own poet, Hauch, with his perpetual pointing "upwards" and his partiality for pilgrims and hermits.

But in Romanticism at this stage, in spite of all its bloodless spirituality, sensuality still wells up strong and unre-

[1] "Capricious Phantasus,
A strange old man,
Follows his foolish, wayward bent;
But now they have fettered him,
That he may cease from his trickery,
No longer confuse reasonable thought,
Nor lead poor man astray."

strained. Franz Sternbald, the trained artist, maintains the superiority of Titian and Correggio to all other painters. Of Correggio, whom he especially favours, he says: "Who would dare to vie with him, at least in the representation of voluptuous love? To no other human spirit has there been granted such a revelation of the glories of the realm of the senses."

This standpoint was, as every one knows, soon relinquished, consistency leading to the adoption of another. The brothers Sulpice and Melchior Boisserée of Cologne were in Paris in 1802, when Friedrich Schlegel was studying there, and they had private lectures from him. The old German pictures in the Louvre reminded the young men of old paintings in their native town, which the prevailing academic taste had consigned to oblivion. In consequence of Napoleon's systematic pillage of pictures, there was a good collection of German ones in Paris, which made the study of them an easy matter.

The best idea of what the German medieval artists had produced was to be obtained from the quantities of paintings and wood and stone carving which came into the market after the suppression of monasteries and charitable foundations. At that time men had lost all appreciation for monuments of art; with the utmost indifference they saw churches turned into quarries, and the most precious artistic treasures dispersed to the four winds. Masterpieces were sold for a trifle, and the purchasers of the supposed old rubbish were actually pitied. Altar-pieces were made into window-shutters, dovecots, tables, and roofing; the caretakers in the monasteries often used old paintings on wood as fuel, for as a rule even the best were unrecognisable, from taper-smoke, dust, and dirt.[1]

After Friedrich Schlegel, in his periodical, *Europa*, had drawn attention to the wealth of old German paintings, the brothers Boisserée began to collect the scattered treasures, travelling up and down the Rhine and throughout the Netherlands to track out the long-despised works. By 1805 a collection of Flemish and German masters had been made, which exercised great influence on the history of art.

[1] Sepp: *Görres und seine Zeit*, 89, 90.

The revival of enthusiasm for early German art led to predilection for the pre-Raphaelite Italian painters. All honour to the pre-Raphaelites! From Fiesole and Giotto to Masaccio, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Luca Signorelli, Perugino, and Pinturicchio, all Europe pays them the homage that is their due. But Friedrich Schlegel, in his article in *Europa* on Raphael, exalts the pre-Raphaelite at the expense of the succeeding period. He says: "With this newer school, typified by such names as Raphael, Correggio, Giulio Romano, and Michael Angelo, begins the decay of art." And this is considered to be so patent a fact that Schlegel does not think it necessary to offer any justification of his assertion; nay, two pages later he actually confesses that he has not seen any of Michael Angelo's works. Here we have the perfection of Romantic insolence. This paragon of an art critic, who, in order the better to exalt the old monkish pictures, dates the decay of art from Raphael, Correggio, Titian, and Michael Angelo, admits without the slightest feeling of shame that he has not seen so much as one of the works of the greatest of these men. Despising such a paltry thing as knowledge, he judges him with his inner consciousness.

But it is unnecessary to anticipate; for in *Sternbald* itself monkish piety, with all its languishing fanaticism, has already come to life again in an unctuousness without parallel. This it was which so irritated Goethe. The idea that piety lies at the foundation of all true art, a theory which was speedily adopted by the whole school of neo-German "Nazarenic" painters, he constantly jeered at. An expression he often used in speaking of the "Nazarenes" was, that they Sternbaldised (*sternbaldisierten*).

The essay on Winckelmann which Goethe published about this time was a direct attack upon the Romanticists. In it he writes: "This description of the antique mind, with its concentration upon this world and its blessings, leads directly to the reflection that such advantages are only compatible with a pagan spirit. That self-confidence, that living and acting in the present, that simple reverence for the gods as ancestors and admiration for them as if they were works of art, that resignation to an inevitable fate, and that belief in a

future of highly prized posthumous fame, all these things together constitute such an indivisible whole, unite in such a manner to form the human existence designed by nature herself, that those pagans show themselves alike robust and sane in the supreme moment of enjoyment and in the dread moment of self-sacrifice or annihilation. This pagan spirit is apparent in all Winckelmann's actions and writings. . . . And we must keep this frame of mind of his, this remoteness from, nay, this actual antipathy to the Christian standpoint, in view when we judge his so-called change of religion. Winckelmann felt that, in order to be a Roman in Rome, in order really to live the life of the place, it was necessary that he should become a member of the Catholic Church, subscribe to its beliefs, and conform to its usages. . . . The decision came all the more easily to him in that, born pagan as he was, Protestant baptism had not availed to make a Christian of him. . . . There is no doubt that a certain opprobrium, which it seems impossible to avoid, attaches to every man who changes his religion. This shows us that what men set most store by is steadfastness ; and they value it the more because, themselves divided into parties, they have their own peace and security always in view. Where destiny rather than choice has placed us, there we are to remain. . . . So much for a very serious side of the question ; there is a much lighter and more cheerful one. Certain positions taken up by others, of which we do not approve, certain of their moral offences, have a peculiar attraction for our imagination. . . . People whom we should otherwise think of as merely notable, or amiable, now seem to us very mysterious, and it cannot be denied that Winckelmann's change of religion has added greatly to the *romance* of his life and character."

We can fancy how such an utterance enraged the Romanticists, who at that time were all on the point of going over to Catholicism. Thenceforward there was no more worship of Goethe. Tieck was in Rome, and the report spread that he was about to embrace the Catholic faith, to which his wife and daughter had become converts. Friedrich Schlegel was preparing to take the final

step. He was lecturing at Cologne, but making application for a regular appointment in every likely quarter—Cologne, Paris, Würzburg, Munich, &c. "Given really tempting conditions," he wrote in June 1804, "I should have gone even to Moscow or Dorpat. But," he adds, "my preference was for the Rhine district." Was this because it was a Catholic district? Not at all. "The salmon here is unequalled, so are the crayfish, not to speak of the wine." It was Metternich's pecuniary offer which finally induced him to take the decisive step and join the Church of Rome. He was furious at the essay on Winckelmann, though he expressed unbounded contempt for it. What is most amusing of all, however, is to see how this little work fell like a bomb among the genuine political reactionaries in Vienna. Gentz was already approaching the stage which he had reached when he wrote to Rahel (in 1814) that he had become terribly old and bad (unendlich alt und schlecht), describing his condition thus: "I must give you an idea of the form which my cynicism and egotism have taken. As soon as I can throw down my pen, all my thoughts and time are given to the arrangement of my rooms; I am constantly planning how to procure more money for furniture, perfumes, and every refinement of so-called luxury. My appetite, alas! is gone. Breakfast is the only meal I take any interest in."

In 1805 Gentz writes to his worthy friend, Adam Müller: "What struck me most in your letter was your criticism of Goethe's two latest productions. I know them both, but should never have dared to write as you do; though I will not deny that my opinion of them is the same as yours, only still less favourable. The notes on *Rameau* are simply prosy and commonplace. To write such twaddle nowadays about Voltaire and D'Alembert is really inexcusable in a Goethe. The essays on Winckelmann are atheistic. I should never have credited Goethe with such a bitter and perfidious hatred of Christianity, though I have long suspected him of culpability in this matter. What indecent, cynical, faun-like joy he seems to have felt on making the grand discovery that it was really because Winckelmann was a "born pagan" that the different forms of the Christian religion were a

matter of such indifference to him! No! even Goethe will not easily rise again in my estimation after these two books!"[1]

Goethe's essay, we observe, had gone straight to the mark; the Romanticists felt as if they had received a slap in the face, when he declared himself hostile to their theory of art.

We must now dwell a little on the conception of nature which corresponds to this conception of art. In *Sternbald*, as both Goethe and Caroline indicate, the reader's interest is distracted from the characters and the action by descriptions of scenery.

We have seen that it was Rousseau who rediscovered the feeling for nature. As Sainte-Beuve says somewhere, playing upon Rousseau's own words about the swallow which had built its nest under the eaves of his first home: "He was the swallow that foretold the coming of summer in literature." The same feeling for nature, as has also been shown, reappears in *Werther*. The transformation which it now underwent was this: Rousseau's point of view had been *emotional*, that of the Romanticists was *fantastic*. Hence their return to legends and fairy tales, to the elves and kobolds of popular superstition. Goethe had said:

> "Natur hat weder Kern noch Schale,
> Alles ist sie mit einem Male."[2]

The Romanticists were determined to have to do only with the kernel, with the mysterious inmost substance, which they attempted to extricate, after having themselves inserted it. The mystic mind mirrored itself in nature and saw in it nothing but mysteries. Tieck, as every one knows, coined the word *Waldeinsamkeit* (his friends maintained that it ought to be *Waldeseinsamkeit*). Romanticism shouted with quavering voice into the Waldeinsamkeit (forest solitude), and echo returned quavering answers.

Alexander von Humboldt has pointed out how the ancients really only saw beauty in nature when she was smiling, friendly, and *useful* to man. With the Romanticists it is the

[1] *Briefwechsel zwischen Gentz und Adam Müller*, 48.

[2] "Nature has neither kernel nor shell, she is everything at one and the same time."

reverse. To them nature is unbeautiful in proportion as she is useful, and most beautiful in her wildness, or when she awakens a feeling of vague fear. They rejoice in the darkness of night and of deep ravines, in the utter loneliness which produces a shudder of terror; and Tieck's full moon shines as unchangeably over the landscape as though it were a theatrical one of oiled paper with a lamp behind it. I call it Tieck's moon, because it is incontestably Tieck who is the originator of the Romantic moonlit landscape. Nor is it difficult to understand how it should be he, rather than any other of the young writers, who originates such expressions as "forest solitude," "magic moonlit nights," &c., &c. Tieck was born in Berlin, perhaps of all large towns the one whose surroundings possess the fewest natural attractions. Those sandy heaths of Brandenburg, with their tall, spare firs standing stiffly in rows like Prussian soldiers, form as meagre a landscape as one could well find. Whilst Rousseau, living amidst scenery of paradisaic beauty (the neighbourhood of Geneva and Mont Blanc), was strongly, directly impressed by nature, Tieck, in his unlovely surroundings, was seized by the city-dweller's morbid longing for wood and mountain; and this longing gave birth to a fantastic conception of nature. The cold daylight glare of Berlin, and its modern, North German rationalism awoke longings for the primeval forests and an inclination towards primitive poetry.

To prove the truth of this assertion, one has only to read such a passage in the biography of Tieck as the following account of his stay in Halle in 1792: "How entirely different was the nature which met his eyes here in the green valley of the Saale, how much richer and more friendly than the flat heaths surrounding Berlin! The feeling of infinite longing seized him with redoubled force, and filled his heart with almost painful excitement as he wandered through the woods in the springtime. Once more he became intoxicated with nature; a mysterious power seemed to drive him onwards. His favourite resting-place was the Hölty bench near Giebichenstein, from which he overlooked the river and the valley. How often did he watch the sun sink beneath the clouds and the moon mirror herself with a

thousand golden beams in the rippling water, or gleam dreamily through the branches! Here he lay many a summer night, drinking in nature in ample draughts."

Is not this the longing for nature of the man who is an exile from it, the view of nature which has the city pavement as its background?

In the description given of the evening after a tiring walk taken by Tieck and Wackenroder in the Fichtelgebirge, Tieck's conception of nature is still more distinctly associated with his personal impressions: "Wackenroder, unaccustomed to such fatigue, flung himself at once upon the bed, but Tieck was too excited. He could not sleep after all the experiences of that day. The spirits of nature awoke. He opened the window. It was the mildest, most magnificent summer night. The moon shed her soft, clear beams upon him. There it was before his eyes, the moonlit, witching night, nature with her ancient, yet ever new marvels and magic! His heart once again swelled high. To what far, unknown goal was he being drawn with irresistible force? Softly and soothingly the clear tones of a horn came floating through the night. A feeling of sadness stole over him, and yet he was intensely happy."[1]

Observe that not even the horn is wanting. What *is* wanting, what Tieck is destitute of, is any definite aim. We have the same thing in *Sternbald*, where the wandering artist, led only by his longings and his prophetic enthusiasm, is always, as he himself confesses, forgetting his real aim. "It is not possible," says one of the characters in the book, "to forget one's aim, for this reason, that the sensible man arranges matters so that he has no aim." No one can fail to see the close connection between this particular species of feeling for nature and Romantic arbitrariness, nor how they mutually develop each other.

Let us see the kind of landscapes which Franz Sternbald understands and paints, and how he understands and paints them.

In one part of the book we read: "This was the landscape which Franz intended to paint; but the real scene

[1] Köpke, i. 139, 163.

seemed very prosaic to him, compared with its reflection in the water." Clear outlines, definite forms, are dry prose ; but the reflection in the water, the picture as it were to its second power, is Romantic refinement, duplication, glorification. In another part Franz says : "I should choose to paint lonely, terrible scenes—ruinous, crumbling bridges spanning the space between two precipitous rocks, with a foaming torrent raging in the abyss below; strayed travellers whose cloaks flap in the wet wind ; horrid brigands rushing from their caves, stopping and plundering carriages, and fighting with travellers." Real stage scenery this, with melodrama into the bargain !

And in what spirit is nature apprehended ? "Sometimes," says Franz, "my imagination sets to work and will not rest until it has thought out something quite unheard of. It would have me paint strange objects, of complicated and almost incomprehensible construction—figures composed of parts of all kinds of animals, their lower extremities being plants ; insects and reptiles with a strange humanness about them, expressing human moods and passions in a wonderful and horrible manner."

What a picture ! what a jumble of monstrosities ! Can you not hear Hoffmann fast approaching with his caravan of monsters ? The elephant stands on his head, and has a trunk which ends in a garfish ; the cat writes its memoirs ; the door-knocker is really an old market-woman, &c., &c. Are we not reminded here again, as in *Der Freischütz*, of the temptations of St. Anthony, as painted by Teniers, or, better still, by Höllen-Breughel, with a regular witches' Sabbath. To the genuine Romanticist, nature, with all her myriads of living forms and beings, seems a great toy-cupboard, and all the toys babble and chatter like those in Andersen's fairy tale.

Read this description of a romantic landscape taken from Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*: "From a height they looked down upon a romantic country, strewn with towns and castles, with temples and tombs, a country which united the gentle charms of inhabited plains with the terrible charms of deserts and precipitous mountains. The most beautiful colours were happily blended. Mountain peaks gleamed like

fireworks in their coverings of ice and snow. The smiling plain was clothed in the freshest of green. The distance decked itself in every shade of blue, and the deep blue of the sea threw into relief the innumerable bright pennons waving from the masts of numerous fleets. In the background we could see a shipwreck, in the foreground a merry country feast; far off the terribly beautiful eruption of a volcano and the desolation wrought by an earthquake, and near at hand a pair of lovers exchanging the sweetest caresses under sheltering trees. On one side of this scene a frightful battle was raging, and at no great distance from the battle was to be seen a theatre with a ludicrous play going on. Upon the other side, in the foreground, the corpse of a young girl lay upon a bier, with an inconsolable lover and weeping parents kneeling by its side; in the background sat a sweet mother with her child at her breast, angels nestling at her feet, and peeping through the branches above her head."

What a pot-pourri! And over it all is shed the indispensable pale, yellow light of that friend and well-wisher, protector and betrayer of lovers, that supreme comforter and divinity of the Romanticists—the man in the moon. He is their salvation. His round face and his profile have exactly the degree of distinctness permissible or possible in a Romantic countenance. All the knights of Romanticism wear his yellow livery. And a truer knight of the moon than Franz Sternbald is not to be found.

"I would," he says, "that I could fill the whole world with my song of love, that I could move the moonlight and the rosy dawn, so that they should echo my grief and happiness, until trees, branches, leaves, and grass all took up the melody, repeating it as with millions of tongues." Hereupon he sings a "moonlight song":

"Hinter'm Wasser wie flimmernde Flammen,
Berggipfel oben mit Gold beschienen,
Neigen rauschend und ernst die grünen
Gebüsche die blinkenden Häupter zusammen.

Welle, rollst du herauf den Schein,
Des Mondes rund freundlich Angesicht?
Es merkt's und freundlich bewegt sich der Hain,
Streckt die Zweig' entgegen dem Zauberlicht.

Fangen die Geister an auf den Fluthen zu springen,
Thun sich die Nachtblumen auf mit Klingen,
Wacht die Nachtigall im dicksten Baum,
Verkündigt dichterisch ihren Traum.
Wie helle, blendende Strahlen die Töne nieder fliessen,
Am Bergeshang den Wiederhall zu grüssen."[1]

Here we have it all! The glittering flames of the moon, bushes with twinkling heads, rolling billows bearing onwards the face of the full moon, spirits dancing upon waves, night as described by Novalis, night flowers, and a nightingale whose song flows like clear, dazzling moonbeams.

And exactly the same thing recurs again and again. Franz has a dream: "Unperceived, he painted the hermit and his devotion, the forest and its moonlight; he even succeeded, he himself knew not how, in getting the nightingale's song into his picture." Oh, that musical pictorial art! Was not Goethe right in saying that there is more music than painting in the book?

It is very significant that the man who revelled thus in the fantastic suggestions of a district where nature was poor and sterile, should have altogether failed to appreciate the richness and luxuriance, the abundance of healthy sap and vigour, which distinguish the south of England. Shakespeare has had few such fervent admirers as Tieck; and Tieck naturally had the desire to see with his own eyes the natural surroundings amidst which his great teacher and master had spent his life, and from which he had derived his earliest impressions. He expected much. But, oh! what a disappointment! That mind which fancied itself akin to Shakespeare's found nothing congenial in the scenery round Shakespeare's home. The chief characteristic

[1] "Beyond the lake there's a glittering and flaming; the mountain-tops are tipped with gold; gravely the bushes rustle and bend, and lay their twinkling green heads together. Wave, art thou rolling to us the reflection of the round, friendly face of the moon? The trees recognise it, and joyfully stretch forth their branches towards the magic light. The spirits begin to dance on the waves; the flowers of the night unfold their petals with melodious sound; where the leaves are thickest the nightingale awakes and tells her dream; her notes flow forth like clear, dazzling beams, to greet the echo on the mountain side."

of these counties is an almost incredible luxuriance and vigour of growth. But this wealth of vegetation is unpoetical to the Romanticist, because it is useful, because it has a purpose. Only the blossom which bears no fruit is romantic. We understand his disappointment. Nowhere else does one see such mighty, spreading oaks, nowhere such high and succulent grass. As far as the eye can reach, the green carpet spreads over the undulating fields and the rich meadows, where magnificent cattle graze and ruminate. Quantities of white, yellow, and blue meadow and field flowers break the monotony of colour, and breathe a perfume which the moisture of the air keeps so fresh that it never palls. This vegetation is above all else fresh, not, like that of the south, striking in its contours. The watery, juicy plant does not live long ; life streams through it and is gone. The moist air envelops trees and plants in a sort of luminous vapour which catches and tempers the sunbeams ; and, as in Denmark, banks of clouds constantly traverse the pale blue sky. When this sky happens to be for a short time perfectly clear, and the sun reaches the earth without passing through mist, the rain and dewdrops sparkle on the green grass and upon the silken and velvet petals of the myriads of gay flowers more brilliantly than diamonds. What matter that the grass is destined to be eaten ? Does not part of its beauty lie in its nutritious look ? What matter that the fruitful fields are cultivated with the assistance of all the newest agricultural machinery, or that the cattle are tended with the most intelligent solicitude ? Is not this the very reason why both animals and plants look so strong, so well nourished, and so nourishing ? What we have here is certainly not the imposing beauty of the desert or the ocean, or of Swiss scenery. But has not this landscape a poetry of its own ? Who can have spent an evening in Kew Gardens without mentally placing the elfin dance from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in exactly this scenery, these beautiful parks, with their gigantic old oaks ? It was in these surroundings that Shakespeare wrote them. We can divine with what eyes he looked upon the landscape. With what eyes does Tieck look upon it ?

"Having seen London," says Köpke, "he wished to make acquaintance with some other part of England. Where should he turn his steps, if not to Shakespeare's birthplace? On the way he visited Oxford. But neither was this scenery to his taste. The country they drove through was luxuriantly green, splendidly cultivated; but it was too well ordered, too artificial (No primitive poetry!); it had lost its originality. It lacked that simplicity, that holiness, as he called it, which touches the heart, and by which he had so often been moved in the most sterile parts of his native land. Here industry had destroyed the poetic aroma."

It is clear, then, that there must have been something in the scenery of his own country which appealed to Tieck's personal predispositions. The fantastic conception of nature would not have been carried to such an extreme in this particular country, if there had not been something fantastic in the scenery of the country. It is very evident that German scenery must have met the fantastic spectator half way.

In the first volume of this work, I attempted, by means of a description of Italian scenery, to show how unromantic even the most beautiful of it is. Nor, in spite of the Black Forest and the Blocksberg, can German scenery be called really fantastic; for, as Taine says, it is only the beauty of art which is fantastic; that of nature is more than fantastic; the fantastic does not exist except in our human brain. Still, nature does provide excuses for a certain amount of fantasy. It is especially to be born in mind that in characteristically German scenery the sea is absent, and with it the feeling of wideness and freeness which it alone gives. In river and mountain scenery there is never the wide, open horizon to which we Danes are accustomed.

But, not to lose myself in generalisations, let me give an idea of the scenery amidst which Tieck himself lived longest —that district in the neighbourhood of Dresden which goes by the name of Saxon Switzerland. I shall describe in a few words how it impresses me, and then proceed to show

what impression it produces on a Romantic poet. This I can do reliably and exactly, for I have personally known several Romantic poets, and have recently travelled through the district in question in company with an old poet of Romantic tendencies.

We had spent some days in the clear mountain air, looking out over the high open country and rocky peaks of Bohemia, which resemble a sea, with sharply outlined mountains emerging like islands—an interminable stretch of fields and pine-clad rocks. We went through the Uttenwalder Grund up to the Bastei. The valley is shut in by high, fantastic sandstone rocks, piled up in layers, with pine trees clustering in every crevice. The upper part of the rock often projects threateningly over the lower, seeming as though about to fall. One sees many strange freaks of nature—gateways, even triple gateways. In climbing up to the Bastei, one has on the left that remarkable landscape with the steep rocks standing out like giant gravestones—tragic, awe-inspiring scenery, that would make a fitting background for the dance of the dead nuns in *Robert le Diable*. Standing on the Bastei, one looks over the great plain with its precipitous mountain islands (the fortress of Königstein is built upon one of these), straight, hard lines, absolutely unpicturesque. Kuhstall is an enormous dome of rock. The whole scenery has the appearance of being designed by man, of being a fantastic art production. The last time I saw it, in glorious sunlight, the view was marvellously imposing. Over the great pine-forest which clothed the lower heights, its tree-tops looking like felt or wool, lay a bluish green haze, which spread up the sides of the surrounding hills. The Bohemian villages lay in groups, shining like windows in the sun—in the distance were basaltic mountains, nearer at hand pyramidal, square, or obelisk-shaped rocks. Wherever a single deciduous tree stood among the pines, its yellow autumnal leaves shone amidst their dark surroundings like patches of gold. The only other yellow was that of the lichen upon some of the rocks. These rocks looked as though giants in the morning of time had pelted each

other with them, as children pelt each other with stones, or had played at heaping them one on the top of another.

From the Wintersberg the hills look like the remains of a Cyclopean city. An enormous rock, steep and smooth as a wall, stands, decked with firs, in the centre of a wide landscape. Of all one sees, Prebischthor is perhaps what strikes one as being most beautiful. Here again the rocks have taken a fantastic shape, that of a gateway. A gigantic, beam-like rock has laid itself like a lintel across two rock towers. Sitting under it, one looks down upon two separate landscapes, one through the arch to the left, the other an open one upon the right. As I sat there in the evening, the first was hard, cold, austere; over the other the sun was setting, red and glowing. The one was, as it were, in a major, the other in a minor key; the one was like a face without eyes, the other glowed and beamed.

Such was this scenery in the eyes of an ordinary, sober-minded traveller. The Romanticist who was my companion seemed to me to be less moved by the spectacle than I was; at least he said very little about it during the course of the day. But when, towards night, we were making our way down the mountain, his imagination was suddenly fired. It was quite dark, and the darkness acted upon his nerves. It seemed to him as if more and more of the spirits of nature came forth, the darker it grew. And when, in the distance, we saw the first points of light coming from the windows of houses on the mountain side, houses which we could not distinguish on account of the darkness, he had the feeling that these windows must be in the rock itself, and that we could see in if we were only near enough. The illuminated panes were to him great eyes, with which the spirit of the mountain looked out at us; he felt as if the wooded hillside were watching us. He was in a weird, eccentric, genuinely Romantic mood, and I could not follow him. But on this occasion I had the opportunity of learning by personal observation how a German Romanticist of the good old days viewed nature; how it was not until night that it really

became nature to him; how he did not look at it, but to one side of it or behind it; and by observing how much more, and yet how much less, my companion felt face to face with nature than I did, I arrived at an understanding of the legitimacy and the narrowness, the unnaturalness and the poetry of the Romantic conception of nature.[1]

[1] The above is a faithful account of the effect produced by this scenery upon the Danish poet M. Goldschmidt in the autumn of 1872.

XI

ROMANTIC DUPLICATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

THOSE among my readers who have stood in a room lined with mirrors, and seen themselves and everything else reflected *ad infinitum*, above, below, on every side, have some idea of the vertigo which the study of Romantic art at times produces.

Every one who has read Holberg's *Ulysses von Ithacia* remembers how droll the effect is when the characters, as they are perpetually doing, make fun of themselves and what they represent—when, for example, Ulysses exhibits the long beard which has grown during the ten years' campaign, or when we read upon a screen, "This is Troy," or when, at the close, the Jews rush in and tear off the actor's back the clothes which he had borrowed to play Ulysses in. Histrionic art, as every one knows, depends for its effect upon illusion. And illusion is an aim common to many of the arts. A statue and a painting deceive quite as much as a play, the illusion being contingent upon our momentarily taking the stone for a human being, and the painted flat surface for receding reality, in exactly the same way as we forget the actor in his rôle. This illusion, however, is only complete for a moment. It is, indeed, possible for the perfectly uneducated man to be entirely deceived. An Indian soldier in Calcutta shot an actor who was playing the part of Othello, exclaiming: "It shall never be said that a negro murdered a white woman in my presence!" But in the case of the educated man, the illusion comes and goes; it comes at the moment when the tragedy brings tears into his eyes, and goes at the moment when he draws out his pocket-handkerchief and looks at his neighbour. The effect of the work of art is, as it were,

focussed in this illusion. The illusion is the reflection of the work of art in the spectator's mind—the appearance, the play, by means of which the unreal becomes reality to the spectator.

In the simple, straightforward work of art no special attention is devoted to illusion; it is not aimed at; nothing is done to strengthen it or to give it piquancy; but still less is anything done to destroy it.

It is not difficult, however, to understand how a certain piquant quality may be communicated to the illusion produced by any art. When, for instance, a Hermes, or any idol, is represented on a bas-relief, when a picture represents a studio or a room with pictures hanging on the walls, a strong indication is hereby conveyed that the bas-relief itself is not intended to affect us as statuary, nor the pictures as painting. And the same sort of effect is produced when one or other of the characters in a comedy cries: "Do you take me for a stage-uncle?"

The theatrical illusion is still further heightened, or, to be quite correct, is still more entirely forgotten, when some of the characters in a play themselves perform a play, as in *Hamlet* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* It seems extraordinary or impossible that the spectators of this second play should also be acting. The illusion here is artificially strengthened, and yet at the same time weakened, by attention being drawn to it. It is plain that this play with illusions had an immense attraction for Tieck; it was inevitable that it should have. Since it is illusion which makes art serious reality to the spectator, it is by the destroying of the illusion that he is made to feel strongly that art is free, fanciful play.

So Tieck mocks ironically at things which are usually ignored in order not to disturb the illusion. In *Puss in Boots* the King says to Prince Nathaniel: "But do tell me; how is it that you who live so far away can speak our language so fluently?" Nathaniel: "Hush!" The King: "What?" Nathaniel: "Hush, hush! For any sake be quiet, or the audience too will be finding out how unnatural it is." And, sure enough, one of the spectators presently remarks: "Why in the world can't the prince talk a foreign

language and have it translated by his interpreter? What utter nonsense it all is!" This last speech is of course sarcasm, aimed at that demand for realism in art of which Iffland and Kotzebue were advocates. We have one expression of the demand in question in the French misconception of the Aristotelian doctrine of the unity of time and place. Writing on this subject, Schlegel, following Lessing's example, remarked that, after one had taken the great plunge and agreed to regard the stage as the world, it was surely easy to take the lesser one and sometimes permit the said stage to represent different localities. And the Romanticists were never weary of extolling the old Shakespearian theatre (where the place represented was simply intimated by a label attached to the scenes) as a higher development of art than that of their own day. The champions of realism in art were at that time advocating the substitution of solid walls for scenes; Schlegel maintained that those who insisted on having three walls on the stage were logically obliged to go a step farther and have a fourth wall, on the side towards the audience.

It is out of pure defiance of the philistine conception of art that Tieck amuses himself by seating an audience upon the stage and having the play within the play performed to the accompaniment of their critical remarks. They censure, they praise, now condemning a scene as superfluous, now approving the author for his courage in introducing horses upon the stage. While the learned man and the fool are disputing in the palace before the king upon his throne, the former says: "The gist of my argument is, that the new play *Puss in Boots* is a good play." "That is exactly what I deny," says the fool; whereupon one of the audience cries in amazement: "What! the play itself is mentioned in the play!"

A still more extraordinary state of matters prevails in *Die Verkehrte Welt* ("The Topsy-turvy World"). As Scaramouch is riding through the forest on his donkey, a thunderstorm suddenly comes on. One naturally expects him to take shelter. Not at all. "Where the deuce does this storm come from?" he cries; "there's not a word about it in my

part. What absurd nonsense! My donkey and I are getting soaked. Machinist! machinist! hi! in the devil's name stop it!" The machinist enters and excuses himself, explains that the audience had expressed a desire for stage-thunder, and that he had consequently met their wishes. Scaramouch entreats the audience to change its mind, but to no purpose; thunder they will have. "What! in a sedate historical play?" It thunders again. "It's a very simple matter," says the machinist; "I blow a little pounded colophony through a flame; that makes the lightning; and at the same moment an iron ball is rolled overhead, and there you have the thunder." Play with illusion cannot be carried further than this except by introducing in the play which the performing audience is witnessing, another play acted before yet another audience. "How extraordinary it is!" says Scävola, the blockhead; "we are an audience, and yonder sit people who are an audience too." The plays are fitted into one another like puzzle-boxes.

The madness reached its climax when, within this new inmost play, there appears yet another play. It is confusion worse confounded. "Nay, this is too much," cries Scävola. "Just think of it, good people all! Here we sit as an audience and watch a play; in that play sits another audience watching a third play, and for the actors in that third play yet another play is being acted." And he goes on to explain, like a true Romanticist: "One often has *dreams* like this, and they are terrible; and thoughts, too, sometimes spin themselves in this fashion ever farther and farther into the heart of things. And both the one and the other are enough to drive a man crazy."

But the music between the acts contains the key to the whole work. The lively Allegro says: "Do ye indeed know what ye desire, ye who seek for coherence in all things? When the golden wine gleams in the glass and ye are animated by its good spirit, when ye feel doubly full of life and soul, and all the floodgates of your being are opened, what do ye think of then? Can ye order and regulate then? Ye enjoy yourselves and the harmonious confusion." And the Rondo says: "Whenever the philosopher is surprised

by a thing, and cannot understand it, he exclaims: 'There is no reason in it.' Nay, when reason penetrates to the heart of itself, when it has investigated its own inmost being and carefully observed itself, it says: 'In this, too, there is no reason.' . . . But the man who with reason despises reason, is a reasonable man. Much poetry is prose gone mad, much prose is only crippled poetry; that which lies between poetry and prose is not the best either. O music! whither tend thy steps? Neither is there any reason in thee."

In his critical writings Tieck himself gives us the clue to his procedure by averring that the aim of Romantic comedy is to lull the spectator into a dreamy mood. "In the midst of a dream," he says, "the soul often does not believe firmly in its visions; but if the dreamer sleeps on, the endless succession of new magic appearances restores the illusion, keeps him in a charmed world, makes him lose the standard of reality, delivers him up at last completely to the dominion of the incomprehensible."

Music is the formless deep to which the wearied imagination of the Romanticist returns after contemplating itself reflected *ad infinitum* in its mirror chamber. And the work of art may be likened to one of those carved ivory balls which enclose a whole set of ivory balls, one within the other.

This style of drama was amusingly parodied by J. L. Heiberg in his witty satirical play, *Julespög og Nytaarslöjer* ("Christmas Fun and New Year's Drollery"). There is less freedom and originality in Hoffmann's imitation, *Prinzessin Blandina,* in which, in scenes laid behind the scenes, the Stage Manager and the Director discuss the play. The Stage Manager says: "Machinist, give the signal for night." Director: "Why, you are surely not going to have night already? It will disturb the illusion. It is hardly three minutes since Roderick breakfasted in the desert." Stage Manager: "It is the direction given in the book." Director: "Then it is the book that is crazy, and the play is written without the slightest understanding of dramatic art."

In a different department of literature, in the writings of

our Danish philosopher, Kierkegaard, we come upon the mirror chamber with its repeated reflections psychologically applied. As the German Romanticist ironically hovers above his own play, with its Chinese puzzle-box scenes and figures, so the Danish psychologist draws further and further away from his subject by putting one author, as it were, inside another. Listen to his explanation in the *Afsluttende Efterskrift* ("Concluding Postscript"): "My position is even a more external one than that of any author whose characters are imaginary, but who appears personally in his preface. A prompter, impersonal, or personal in the third degree, I have created authors whose prefaces, nay, whose very names are their own production. In the pseudonymous books there is not a word of my own; I judge them as an uninterested third party, have no knowledge of their meaning except that of the ordinary reader, and not the most remote private connection with them, as is indeed impossible in the case of a doubly reflected communication. A single word from me personally, in my own name, would be a piece of presumptuous self-forgetfulness, and would, from the dialectical point of view, destroy the pseudonymous character of the work. I am no more the publisher, Victor Eremita, than I am the Seducer or the Assessor in *Enten-Eller;* Eremita is the poetically real subjective thinker, whom we meet again in *In Vino Veritas.* In *Frygt og Bæven* ("Fear and Trembling") I am no more Johannes de Silentio than I am the Knight of Faith whom he depicts; and just as little am I the author of the preface to the book, it being a characteristic utterance of a poetically-real subjective thinker. In that tale of woe, *Skyldig?—Ikke Skyldig?* ("Guilty or not Guilty?"), I am no more the experimenter than I am the subject of the experiment, since the experimenter is a poetically-real subjective thinker, and the being he experiments on is his psychologically inevitable production. I am a negligeable quantity, *i.e.* it is immaterial what I am. . . . I have all along been sensible that my personality was an obstruction which the Pseudonymi must involuntarily and inevitably long to be rid of, or to have made as insignificant as possible, yet which they at the same time, regarding the matter from the ironical and reflec-

tive standpoint, must desire to retain as repellant opposition; for I stand to them in the ironically combined relation of secretary and dialectically reduplicated author of the author or authors."

However different the causes of the reduplication may be in this case, the phenomenon itself is of near kin to the foregoing one. To keep the general public at a distance, to avoid laying bare his heart, and, most important of all, to avoid the tiresome responsibility entailed by speaking in his own name, Kierkegaard places as many authors between himself and the public as possible. Even taking his reasons into consideration, I confess that to me the proceeding seems super-subtle, a sort of reminiscence of the Romantic irony. For although Kierkegaard, as regards his matter, is in many ways ahead of Romanticism, he is still connected with it by his style. It is natural enough that he cannot, or will not, bear the responsibility for what his imaginary characters, the Assessor and the Seducer, say; but it is pure imagination on his part to suppose himself capable of producing his authors at second hand, to suppose, for instance, that he has created the hero in the Engagement Story exactly as Frater Taciturnus would have created him. Several of his would-be authors, Constantin Constantius and Frater Taciturnus, for example, are scarcely to be distinguished from one another, and there is nothing peculiarly characteristic about their productions. The third part of *Stadierne* ("Stages on the Road of Life") was, as Kierkegaard's own memoranda show, originally intended to form part of *Enten-Eller*. When he remarks (in *Afstuttende Efterskrift*, p. 216) that the most attentive reader will hardly succeed in finding in that work, either in language or turn of thought, a single reminiscence of *Enten-Eller*, he betrays great capability of self-deception. Both works show in every line that they are written by the same author; in both we come upon the same thoughts, often expressed in almost the same words. The Assessor in *Stadierne* judges Aladdin exactly as he is judged by the Æsthete in *Enten-Eller:* "What makes Aladdin so great is the strength of his desire."

Along with all this duplication and reduplication we have

in the case of the Romanticists the wildest caprices in the matter of the order of presentation. *The Topsy-turvy World* begins with the epilogue and ends with the prologue ; by such pranks imagination proclaims its independence of all law. Frater Taciturnus records what happened to him last year along with what is happening to him this year ; every day at noon he notes down what happened that day a year ago (What a memory!), and at midnight what has occurred during the day. Naturally, it is almost impossible to separate the two threads of event. In Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*, the cat writes its memoirs on sheets of paper which have its master's, Kapellmeister Kreisler's, memoranda on the other side. Both sides of the sheets are printed, the one following the other, so that we read two utterly unconnected manuscripts mixed up with each other, often with interruptions in the middle of sentences or words. Wilfulness, caprice, play with one's own production could scarcely be carried farther. Yet the dissolution of established form did go further, much further. The Romanticists did not rest content with having shattered the conventions of art ; they proceeded to decompose the human personality, and that in many different manners.

It was Novalis who led the way. In *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* the hero seems to have a foreknowledge of everything that happens to him. "Each new thing that he saw and heard seemed only to shove back bolts, to open secret doors in his soul." But the strangest impression of all is produced on him by his discovery of a mysterious book in the cave of the hermit Count of Hohenzollern, a book in which, although he is as yet unable to interpret it, he finds the enigma of his existence, an existence beginning before his birth and stretching into the future after his death. Novalis's romance being an allegory and myth, his design being to make a single individual represent the whole eternal story of the soul, he turns to his purpose one of the oldest hypotheses of humanity, the idea that the individual reappears generation after generation. Thus the past and the future take part in the present, in the shape of memory and prophetic intuition. He does not actually believe in the transmigration of souls, but to him, the Romanticist who lives in the contemplation

of the eternal, time is of such subordinate significance that, just as he recognises no difference between a natural and a supernatural event, so he sees none between past, present, and future. In this way the individual existence is extended throughout an unlimited period of history.

In Danish literature we find this Romantic use of the idea of a previous existence in Heiberg's *De Nygifte*. The mother is telling her adopted son about the death of her real son :—

"Den Morgen, da han led sin skrækkelige Dom,
Endnu var det neppe daget—
Traadte Slutteren ind og sagde : 'Kom !
Klokken er nu paa Slaget.'

"Da sank han for sidste Gang til mit Bryst
Og udbröd : 'Et Ord du mig give,
Et kraftigt Ord, som kan være min Tröst
Paa min sidste Gang i Live !"

"Og jeg sagde . . .
Men, Fredrik, du skræmmer mig ! sig . . .
Du rejser dig . . . hvad har du i Sinde?
Du stirrer paa mig saa bleg som et Lig . . .

Fredrik.

"O Moder ! Moder ! hold inde !

Du sagde : 'Naar du for din Frelser staar,
Da sig : Min Gud og min Broder,
Tilgiv mig for dine Martyrsaar,
For min Anger og for min Moder.'

Gertrud.

"Ha ! hvoraf ved du det?

Fredrik.

"Mig det var,
Först nu mig selv jeg fatter.
Det er din virkelige Sön, du har,
Og nu lever han Livet atter." [1]

[1] "The morning he suffered his terrible sentence, ere yet it was day, the warder entered and said : 'Come ! the hour is about to strike.' Then he fell on my breast for the last time, crying : 'Say a word, a word of power, to strengthen me for the last steps I am to take on earth !' And I said . . . But, Fredrik, you frighten me. What is it? Why do you rise and gaze on me thus, pale as a corpse? *Fredrik*—

Heiberg here makes a beautiful and ingenious use of the idea. But the Romanticists are not content with this. It is not enough for them to transpose the personality into the past, or to deck it with the bright peacock's tail of future existences. They split the Ego into strips, they resolve it into its elements. They scatter it abroad through space, as they stretch it out through time. For the laws of space and time affect them not.

Self-consciousness is self-duplication. But it is an unhealthy self which cannot overcome and master this self-duplication. This we saw in the case of Lovell and of Roquairol. There is no greater misery than morbid self-contemplation. He who indulges in it separates himself from himself, observes himself from the point of view of a spectator, and ere long experiences the horrible feeling of the prisoner who, when he looks up, sees the eye of the warder at the little glass pane in the door of his cell. His own eye has become quite as terrible to him as another man's. What tends to make this condition permanent is partly the religious and moral feeling that one ought never to lose sight of, but to be always labouring at and improving one's self, and partly natural curiosity regarding the unknown ; one looks upon one's self as a country, the coast of which is known, but the interior of which is still to be explored.

In the case of the man who is healthy in mind and body, this exploration goes on slowly, almost imperceptibly. One fine day the poor prisoner, looking up from his work, finds that the eye has disappeared from the peep-hole. Only now does he begin to breathe, to live. Whether his work be important or unimportant, divine or merely useful, whether he be a Michael Angelo or a cork-cutter, from that moment there is a feeling of balance and unity in his mind ; he feels that he is an entire being. In the case of sickly, inactive natures, the eye is never removed from the peep-hole, and a long continuation of this condition leads the individual to

O mother ! mother ! stop ! You said : 'When you stand before your Creator, say : My God and my Brother, forgive me for the sake of Thy passion, of my repentance, and of my mother !' *Gertrud*—Oh, tell how you know this ? *Fredrik*—Because it was to me you spoke ; not till this moment have I understood myself ; I am your own son, now living life over again."

the verge of madness. But it is to this very condition that the Romanticists cling. It is this which gives birth to the Romantic idea of the "Doppelgänger,"[1] an idea which finds its first expression in Jean Paul's *Leibgeber-Schoppe* (in the meditation on Fichte's Ego), and is to be found in almost all Hoffmann's tales, reaching its climax in his chief work, *Die Elixire des Teufels*. It crops up in the writings of all the Romanticists; we have it in Kleist's *Amphitryon*, in Achim von Arnim's *Die beiden Waldemar*, in Chamisso's poem, *Erscheinung*, and Brentano treats it comically in *Die mehreren Wehmüller*. To Hoffmann the Ego is simply a disguise worn on the top of another disguise, and he amuses himself by peeling off these disguises one by one. He carries out what Roquairol only suggested.

Theodor Hoffmann's life explains the peculiar form which Romantic self-duplication took in his case. He was born in Königsberg in 1776, the son of parents whose inharmonious union was soon dissolved. His mother belonged to a painfully well-regulated and conventional family; his father was as eccentric as he was clever, and had irregular habits which were a great affliction to his wife's relations. Theodor lost his mother early, and the pedantic severity with which his uncle brought him up only made the gifted boy's occasional wild outbursts wilder and madder. He found vent for his feelings in peculiar musical compositions and remarkably clever caricatures. He studied law as a profession, but at the same time devoted much attention to music. At an early age he fell in love with a young married woman. Feeling that the violence of this passion was undermining his reason, he cured himself of it by tearing himself away from his native town, at the age of twenty.

Soon after this he received a government appointment in Posen. The wild dissipation which prevailed in Poland in those days carried him completely off his feet and materially altered his character. For caricaturing one of his superiors he was removed to Plozk, where he led a more regular life.

[1] The apparition of a person, which appears to himself. There being no exact English equivalent of "Doppelgänger" and "Doppelgängerei," these words are retained throughout in German.—*Transl.*

HOFFMANN

In 1804 he was transferred to Warsaw, at that time a Prussian town ; and it was the full, varied, and, to a German, quite foreign life of this important city which gave Hoffmann's literary tendencies their decisive, final bent. Much that is mad and strange in his writings may be attributed to the wild, reckless joviality of the Warsaw days. In Warsaw he met Zacharias Werner, another author who was distinctly influenced by the social life of Poland in the beginning of the century. And here, whilst conscientiously fulfilling the duties of his appointment, he not only found time to cultivate his favourite art, music, and to frequent the society of other musical devotees, but also managed to decorate several halls with frescoes, to ornament a library with alto-reliefs executed in bronze, and to paint a room in the Egyptian style, adroitly introducing amongst the extraordinary representations of Egyptian gods, caricatures of his acquaintances, whom he provided with tails and wings. It was in Warsaw too that he conducted concerts for the first time.

In 1806, as every one knows, Prussian rule in Warsaw came to an end. Hoffmann saw the streets of the town crowded, first with the vanguard of the Russian army—Tartars, Cossacks, and Bashkirs—then with Murat's troops, watched the migrations of the races set in motion by Napoleon's campaign, and at last saw Napoleon himself, whom he, the good German, abhorred as a tyrant. In Dresden, in 1813, he was eye-witness of several small skirmishes and one battle ; he walked over a battlefield, lived through a famine and a species of plague which followed in the train of the war—in short, his imagination was fertilised by all the horrors of the period, the first result being, characteristically enough, merely a set of funny caricatures of the French.

When still quite a young man, he had married a beautiful Polish lady, who made him a devoted and patient wife ; it was probably thanks to her that, in spite of his overstrained nerves, he lived as long as he did. His marriage by no means precluded many passionate attachments to other women, but all these seem to have had their root

rather in imagination than in any real feeling. Three days after a young lady with whom he was madly in love had engaged herself to another, he was perfectly happy, having cured himself of his passion by satirising it. He was helped to bear his woe by the pleasure of caricaturing it.

After figuring as a theatrical architect in Bamberg and conductor of an orchestra in Dresden, he went to Berlin, where he spent the last years of his life as a member of the Kammergericht (one of the principal courts of justice). As was natural, the astonishingly gifted man who could write books, improvise on the piano, compose operas, draw caricatures, and scintillate wit when he was in the humour, became a lion in social circles and a fêted frequenter of the taverns. He devoted a great share of his energy and talent to the observation of his own moods, which he watched closely and described day by day in a kind of diary.

Wine, which he only regarded as an exciting stimulant, was in reality much more than this to him. To it he owed much of his inspiration, his visions, those hallucinations which at first were fanciful, but became ever more serious. In his case intoxication actually produced a new kind of fantastic poetry. When under the influence of alcohol, he saw the darkness suddenly illuminated by phosphorescent light, or saw a gnome rise through the floor, or saw himself surrounded by spectres and terrible grimacing figures, which went on disappearing and reappearing in all kinds of grotesque disguises.

It was almost inevitable that this painstaking observer of his own moods and of the external peculiarities, more especially the oddities, of other men, should care little about nature. If he took a walk in summer, it was only to reach some place or other where he would be certain to meet human beings; and he seldom passed a pastry-cook's or a tavern without dropping in to see what kind of people frequented it. This explains the striking want of any feeling for fresh, open-air nature in his books. His mind was at home in a tavern, not in forest solitudes. But if his sense of the beauties of nature was weak, his enthusiasm for art was so much the more

intense; genuine Romanticist that he is, half of his productions treat of art.

The peculiar, Romantic theory of human personality held by a poet of this temperament and this development was a product of over-impressionable and over-strained nerves and of irregular living. In his diary I find the following memoranda:—

"1804.—Drank Bischof at the new club from 4 to 10. Frightfully agitated in the evening. Nerves excited by the spiced wine. Possessed by thoughts of death and Doppelgänger.

"1809.—Seized by a strange fancy at the ball on the 6th; I imagine myself looking at my Ego through a kaleidoscope—all the forms moving round me are Egos, and annoy me by what they do and leave undone.

"1810.—Why do I think so much, sleeping and waking, about madness?"

It was a settled conviction with Hoffmann that when anything good befalls a man, an evil power is always lurking in the background to paralyse the action of the good power. As he expresses it: "The devil thrusts his tail into everything." He was haunted, says his biographer, Hitzig, by a fear of mysterious horrors, of "Doppelgänger" and spectral apparitions of every kind. He used to look anxiously round while writing about them; and if it was at night, he would often wake his wife and beg her to keep him company till he had finished. He imparted his own fear of ghosts to the characters he created; he drew them "as he himself was drawn in the great book of creation." It does not surprise us to learn that of his own works, he preferred those which contain the most gruesome pictures of madness or the weirdest caricatures—*Brambilla*, for instance.

He relies for effect, in a manner which soon becomes mannerism, upon the sharp contrasts with which he ushers in his terrific or comical scenes. From the commonest, most prosaic every-day life we are suddenly transported into a perfectly distorted world, where miracles and juggling tricks of every kind so bewilder us that in the end no relation, no species of life, no personality, seems definite and certain. We are always in doubt as to whether we are

dealing with a real person, with his spectre, with his essence in another form or other power, or with his fantastic "Doppelgänger."

In one of the lighter tales of Hoffmann's last period, *Der Doppelgänger*, the two principal characters resemble each other so closely that one is constantly being taken for the other; the one is wounded instead of the other; the betrothed of the one cannot distinguish him from the other, &c., &c. All kinds of absurd mistakes are made possible, and the dread of "Doppelgängerei" is turned to good account. The common-sense explanation of the matter is insisted on (much as it is in Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller*), simply because Hoffmann for once, by way of a change, fancied making some attempt at explanation. The explanation, as a matter of fact, explains nothing. All Hoffmann really cared for was the fantastically gruesome effect, just as all Brentano cared for was the fantastically comical one. *Der Doppelgänger* possesses no artistic merit.

There is wittier and more audacious invention in the tale, *The Latest Adventures of the Dog Berganza*. In the first place, we are left uncertain whether the dog is a metamorphosed human being or not; he himself says: "It is possible that I am really Montiel, who was punished by being compelled to assume the shape of a dog; if so, the punishment has been a source of pleasure and amusement." In the second place, even the dog, as dog, sees himself duplicated, and is conscious of the dissolution of the unity of his being. "Sometimes I actually saw myself lying in front of myself like another Berganza, another which yet was myself; and I, Berganza, saw another Berganza maltreated by the witches, and growled and barked at him."

Still greater is the audacity, still more extravagant the whimsicality in the tale of *The Golden Jar*. In it an ugly old Dresden applewoman is at the same time the beautiful bronze knocker on Registrar Lindhorst's door. The metal face of the door-knocker occasionally wrinkles itself up into the old crone's crabbed smile. In addition to this, she is the odious fortune-teller, Frau Rauerin, and good old Lise, the fond nurse of the young heroine of the tale. She can (like the

fortune-teller in *Der Doppelgänger*) suddenly change dress, shape, and features. When the matter of her parentage is cleared up, we learn that her papa was a "shabby feather broom," made of feathers from a dragon's wing, while her mamma was a "miserable beetroot."

Lindhorst, the stolid Registrar, who never seems to feel at home except when sitting in his library in his flowered dressing-gown, surrounded by old manuscripts, is also a great magician, who, in the middle of an ordinary conversation, suddenly begins to relate the most insane occurrences as if they were the most natural in the world. He tells, for instance, that he was once invisibly present at a party—quite a simple matter—he was in the punch-bowl. On another occasion he takes off his dressing-gown, steps without more ado into a bowl of blazing arrack, vanishes in the flames, and allows himself to be drunk.

In creating these doubled and trebled existences, the character, for instance, of the Archive Keeper, who is a Registrar by day and a salamander at night, Hoffmann obviously had in his mind the strange contrast between his own official life, as the conscientious criminal judge, severely rejecting all considerations of sentiment or æstheticism, and his free night life as king of the boundless realm of imagination—a life in which reality, as such, had no part.

But of all Hoffmann's tales, it is *Die Elixire des Teufels* ("The Elixir of Satan") which makes the most powerful impression. Let us dwell for a moment on the hero of this romance, Brother Medardus; for he is a typical character. It is impossible in a brief summary to convey any idea of the mysterious, weird horror of the book; to feel this one must read it. A work more saturated with voluptuousness and horrors the Romantic School, with all its long practice in the style, never produced.—In a certain monastery is preserved a flask of Satanic elixir, which had belonged to St. Anthony. This elixir is believed to possess magic properties. A monk who has tasted it becomes so eloquent that ere long he is the most famous preacher of the monastery. But his eloquence is not of a pious or healthy, but of a carnal, strangely exciting, dæmonic description. Brother

Medardus drinks from the flask. A charming woman, his penitent, falls in love with him, and a longing for the pleasures and delights of the world impels him to leave the monastery. He finds a young man, Count Viktorin, asleep in the forest on the edge of a precipice, and half accidentally pushes him over. From this time onwards every one takes him for the Count.

"My own Ego, the sport of a cruel accident, was dissolved into strange forms, and floated helplessly away upon the sea of circumstances. I could not find myself again. Viktorin is undoubtedly pushed over the precipice by the accident which directed my hand, not my will—I step into his place." And as though this were not marvellous enough, he adds: "But Reinhold knows Father Medardus, the preacher of the Capuchin Monastery; and thus to him I am what I really am. Nevertheless, I am obliged to take Viktorin's place with the Baroness, for I am Viktorin. I am that which I appear to be, and I do not appear to be that which I am. At strife with my own Ego, I am an unanswerable riddle to myself."

Medardus, in his own form, now enters into relations with Viktorin's mistress, the Baroness, who has no idea that he is not Viktorin. He is possessed by carnal desires; women fall in love with him; he gives himself up to sensual pleasures, and in order to attain the fulfilment of his wishes, commits crimes of every kind, including murder. Horrible visions haunt him and drive him from place to place. In the end he is denounced and imprisoned. In prison the confusion of individualities reaches a climax. "I could not sleep; in the strange reflections cast by the dull, wavering light of the lamp upon the walls and ceiling, I saw all kinds of distorted faces grinning at me. I put out the lamp and buried my head in my pillow of straw, only to be still more horribly tormented by the hollow groans of the prisoners and the rattling of their chains." It seems to him that he is listening to the death-rattle of his victims. And now he plainly hears a gentle, measured knocking beneath him. "I listened, the knocking continued, and sounds of strange laughter came up through the floor. I sprang up and

flung myself upon the straw mattress, but the knocking went on, accompanied by laughter and groans. Presently, an ugly, hoarse, stammering voice began calling gently but persistently: 'Me-dar-dus, Me-dar-dus!' An icy shiver ran through my veins, but I took courage and shouted: 'Who is there? Who is there?'" Then the knocking and stammering begins directly beneath his feet: "He, he, he! He, he, he! Lit-tle brother, lit-tle brother Me-dar-dus . . . I am here, am here . . . le-let me in . . . we will g-g-go into the woo-woo-woods, to the woo-woo-woods." To his horror he seems to recognise his own voice. Some of the flagstones of the floor are pushed up, and his own face, in a monk's cowl, appears. This other Medardus is, like him, imprisoned, has confessed, and is condemned to death. Now everything happens as if in a dream. He no longer knows whether he is really the hero of the events which he believes to have happened, or whether the whole is a vivid dream. "I feel as if I had been listening in a dream to the story of an unfortunate wretch, the plaything of evil powers, who have driven him hither and thither, and urged him on from crime to crime."

He is acquitted; the happiest moment of his life is at hand; he is to be united to the woman he loves. It is their wedding day. "At that very moment a dull sound rose from the street below; we heard the shouting of hollow voices and the slow rumbling of a heavy vehicle. I ran to the window. In front of the palace, a cart, driven by the headsman's apprentice, was stopping; in it sat the Monk and a Capuchin friar who was praying loudly and fervently with him. Though the Monk was disfigured by fear and by a bristly beard, the features of my terrible Doppelgänger were only too easily recognisable. Just as the cart, which had been stopped for the moment by the throng, rolled on again, he suddenly glared up at me with his horrible glistening eyes, and laughed loud, and yelled: 'Bridegroom! Bridegroom! Come up on to the house-top! There we will wrestle with one another, and he who throws the other down is king and has the right to drink blood!' I cried: 'You monster! What have I to

do with you?' Aurelia flung her arms round me and drew me forcibly away from the window, crying: 'For God and the Holy Virgin's sake! . . . It is Medardus, my brother Leonard's murderer, whom they are taking to execution.' . . . Leonard! Leonard! The spirits of hell awoke within me, and exerted all the power they possess over the wicked, abandoned sinner. I seized Aurelia with such fury that she shook with fear: 'Ha, ha, ha! mad, foolish woman! I, I, your lover, your bridegroom, am Medardus, am your brother's murderer. You, the Monk's bride, would call down vengeance upon him? Ho, ho, ho! I am king—I will drink your blood.'"

He strikes her to the earth. His hands are covered with her blood. He rushes out into the street, frees the Monk, deals blows right and left with knife and fist, and escapes into the forest. "I had but one thought left, the hunted animal's thought of escape. I rose, but had not taken many steps before a man sprang upon my back and flung his arms round my neck. In vain I tried to shake him off; I flung myself down; I rubbed myself against the trees—all to no purpose—the man only chuckled scornfully. Suddenly the moon shone clear through the dark firs, and the horrible, deathly pale face of the Monk, the supposed Medardus, the Doppelgänger, glared at me with the same appalling glance he had shot at me from the cart. 'He, he, he! little brother! I am w-w-with you still; I'll n-n-never let you go. I can't r-r-run like you. Y-you must carry me. They were go-go-going to break me on the wh-wh-wheel, but I got away.'" This situation is spun out *ad infinitum*, but I forbear. To the end of the book one is uncertain of the real significance of the events, of the ethical tendency of the actions, so completely in this case has imagination disintegrated personality.

The Scandinavian author, Ingemann, has followed Hoffmann in this path. He turns to account, for instance, the eeriness in the idea of loudly calling one's own name in a churchyard at midnight; see his tale, *The Sphinx*, and others in the so-called Callot-Hoffmann style.

But, as already observed, Romanticism is not content

with stretching out and splitting up the Ego, with spreading it throughout time and space. It dissolves it into its elements, takes from it here, adds to it there, makes it the plaything of free fancy. Here, if anywhere, Romanticism is profound; its psychology is correct, but one-sided; it is always on the night side or on the inevitability of things that it dwells; there is nothing emancipating or elevating about it.

In the old days the Ego, the soul, the personality, was regarded as a being whose attributes were its so-called capacities and powers. The words "capacity" and "power," however, only signify that there is in me the possibility of certain events, of my seeing, reading, &c. My true being does not consist of possibilities, but of these events themselves, of my actual condition. My real being is a sequence of inward events. For me, my Ego is composed of a long series of mental pictures and ideas. Of this Ego, I constantly, daily, lose some part. Forgetfulness swallows up gigantic pieces of it. Of all the faces I saw on the street yesterday and the day before, of all the sensations which were mine, only one or two remain in my memory. If I go still farther back, only an exceptionally powerful sensation or thought here and there emerges, like a solitary rocky island, from the ocean of forgetfulness. We only keep together the ideas and pictures that remain to us from our past lives by means of the association of these ideas, that is to say, by the aid of the peculiar power they have, in virtue of certain laws, of recalling each other. If we had no numerical system, no dates, no almanacs, wherewith to give some coherence to our different memories, we should have an extremely slight and indistinct idea of our Ego. But however substantial the long inward chain may seem (and it is strengthened, it gains in tenacity, every time we run over its links in our memory), it happens that we at times introduce into it a link which does not belong to it, at times take a link from it and place it in another chain.[1]

The first of these actions, the introducing of new, incongruous links into the chain of memory, happens in dreams.

[1] Taine: *De l'Intelligence*, ii. 169.

We dream we have done many things which we have never done. It also happens when we have a false recollection. He who has seen a white sheet blowing about in the dark, and believes he has seen a ghost, has such a false recollection. Most myths and legends, especially religious legends, come into existence in this way.

It frequently happens, however, that, instead of adding links to the chain of the Ego, we withdraw them. Thus the sick man, when his mind is wandering, supposes that the words he hears are spoken by a strange voice, or endows his inward visions with an outward reality, as Luther did when he saw the devil in his room in the Wartburg; and the madman not only partly, but entirely confuses himself with some one else.

In a state of reason, then, the Ego is an artificial production, the result of association of ideas. I am certain of my own identity—in the first place, because I associate my name, that sound which I call my name, with the chain of my inward experiences, and secondly, because I keep all the links of this chain connected by the association of ideas, by virtue of which they produce each other. But, since the Ego is thus not an innate but an acquired conception, founded upon an association of ideas which has to maintain itself against the constant attacks of sleep, dreams, imaginations, hallucinations, and mental derangement, it is by its nature exposed to manifold dangers. Just as disease is ever lying in wait for our bodies, so madness lies in wait at the threshold of the Ego, and every now and again we hear it knock.

It is of this correct psychological theory, originally propounded by Hume, that the Romanticists, though they do not define it scientifically, nevertheless have a presentiment. Dreams, dipsomania, hallucinations, madness, all the powers which disintegrate the Ego, which disconnect its links, are their familiar friends. Read, for instance, Hoffmann's tale, *The Golden Jar*, and you will hear voices issue from the apple-baskets, and the leaves and flowers of the elder-tree sing; you will see the door-knocker make faces, &c., &c. The strange, striking effect is here specially due to

the way in which the apparitions suddenly emerge from a background of the most humdrum, ordinary description, from piles of legal documents, or from tureens and goblets. All Hoffmann's characters (like Andersen's Councillor in *The Galoshes of Fortune*, which is an imitation of Hoffmann) are considered by their neighbours to be either drunk or mad, because they always treat their dreams and visions as realities.

Hoffmann created most of his principal characters in his own image. His whole life resolved itself into moods. We see from his diary how anxiously and minutely he observed these. We come on such entries as: "Romantically religious mood; excitedly humorous mood, leading finally to those thoughts of madness which so often force themselves upon me; humorously discontented, highly-wrought musical, romantic moods; extremely irritable mood, romantic and capricious in the highest degree; strange, excited, but poetic gloominess; very comfortable, brusque, ironical, overstrained, morose, perfectly weak moods; extraordinary, but miserable moods; moods in which I felt deep veneration for myself and praised myself immoderately; *senza entusiasmo, senza esaltazione*, every-day moods," &c., &c.

We seem to see the man's spiritual life spread and split itself up fan-wise into musical high and low spirits. It is easy to guess from this register of moods that Hoffmann, genuine lover of night as he was, was in the habit of going to bed towards morning, after having spent the evening and night in a tavern.

Romanticism having thus dissolved the Ego, proceeds to form fantastic Egos, adding here, taking away there.

Take, for an example, Hoffmann's *Klein Zaches*, the little monster who has been endowed by a fairy with the peculiarity "that everything good that others think, say, or do in his presence is attributed to him; the result being that in the society of handsome, refined, intelligent persons he also is taken to be handsome, refined, and cultured—is taken, in short, for a model of every species of perfection with which he comes in contact." When the student reads aloud his charming poems, it is Zaches who is credited with them;

when the musician plays or the professor performs his experiments, it is Zaches who gets the honour and the praise. He grows in greatness, becomes an important man, is made Prime Minister, but ends his days by drowning in a toilet-basin. Without overlooking the satiric symbolism of the story, I draw attention to the fact that the author has here amused himself by endowing one personality with qualities properly belonging to others, in other words, by dissolving individuality and disregarding its limits. With the same satirical intention, the same idea is worked out more ingeniously, though more roughly, by Hostrup, the Dane, in his comedy, *En Spurv i Tranedans* ("A Sparrow among the Cranes" = a dwarf among the giants), in which each one of the other characters attributes to the comical young journeyman tailor the qualities which he himself values most.

Here we have Romanticism amusing itself by adding qualities to human nature; but it found subtracting them an equally attractive amusement. It deprives the individual of attributes which would seem to form an organic part of it; and by taking these away it divides the human being as lower organisms, worms, for example, are divided into greater and smaller parts, both of which live. It deprives the individual, for instance, of his shadow. In Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl*, the man in the grey coat kneels down before Peter, and, with admirable dexterity, strips the shadow off him and off the grass, rolls it up and pockets it—and the story shows us the misfortunes which are certain to befall the man who has lost his shadow.

This same tale of *Peter Schlemihl* shows how Romanticism, as a spiritual force, succeeded in impressing a uniform stamp on the most heterogeneous talents. It would be difficult to imagine two natures more unlike than Chamisso's and Hoffmann's; hence the plot of Chamisso's tale is as simple and readily comprehensible as the plots of Hoffmann's are morbidly extraordinary.

Adalbert von Chamisso was a Frenchman born, who acquired the German character remarkably quickly and completely, to the extent even of developing more than one

quality which we are accustomed to consider essentially German. The son of a French nobleman, he was born in 1781 in the castle of Boncourt, in Champagne. Driven from France as a boy during the Reign of Terror, he became one of Queen Louisa of Prussia's pages, and later, at the age of twenty, a lieutenant in the Prussian army. He was a serious, almost painfully earnest, but absolutely healthy-minded man of sterling worth, brave and honourable, with a little of the heaviness of the German about him and much of the liveliness of the Frenchman.

The reverse of Hoffmann, he was no lover of social pleasures, but all the more ardent a lover of nature. He longed on hot summer days to be able to go about naked in his garden with his pipe in his mouth. Modern dress, modern domestic life and social formalities he regarded in the light of burdensome fetters. His love of nature led him to circumnavigate the globe, enamoured him of the South Sea Islands, and is expressed in much of his poetry.

Nevertheless, the imperceptible intellectual compulsion exercised by the age caused him, as author, to adopt Romantic theories and write in the Romantic style. It is characteristic, however, that when in such a poem as *Erscheinung* ("The Apparition") he treats the Romantic idea of the "Doppelgänger," he does it with a certain moral force which leaves on the reader's mind the impression of genuine despair. The narrator comes home at night and sees himself sitting at his desk. "Who are you?" he asks. "Who disturbs me thus?" returns the "Doppelgänger":—

> "Und er: 'So lass uns, wer du seist, erfahren!'
> Und ich: 'Ein solcher bin ich, der getrachtet
> Nur einzig nach dem Schönen, Guten, Wahren;
> Der Opfer nie dem Götzendienst geschlachtet,
> Und nie gefröhnt dem weltlich-eitlen Brauch,
> Verkannt, verhöhnt, der Schmerzen nie geachtet:
> Der irrend zwar und träumend oft den Rauch
> Für Flamme hielt, doch mutig beim Erwachen
> Das Rechte nur verfocht:—bist du das auch?'

Und er mit wildem kreischend-lautem Lachen :
'Der du dich rühmst zu sein, der bin ich nicht.
Gar anders ist's bestellt um meine Sachen.
Ich bin ein feiger, lügenhafter Wicht,
Ein Heuchler mir und andern, tief im Herzen
Nur Eigennutz, und Trug im Angesicht.
Verkannter Edler du mit deinen Schmerzen,
Wer kennt sich nun? wer gab das rechte Zeichen?
Wer soll, ich oder du, sein Selbst verscherzen?
Tritt her, so du es wagst, ich will dir weichen!'
Drauf mit Entsetzen ich zu jenem Graus :
'Du bist es, bleib und lass hinweg mich schleichen!'
Und schlich zu weinen, in die Nacht hinaus."[1]

The painful moral self-recognition endows the ghost story with marvellous significance.

Chamisso's double nationality was a source of much unhappiness to him in his younger days, when there was violent enmity between the land of his birth and his adopted country. In one of his letters to Varnhagen (December 1805) he writes: "'No country, no people—each man for himself!' These words of yours seemed to come straight from my own heart. They almost startled me; I had to wipe away the tears that rolled down my cheeks. Oh! the same sentiment must have made itself felt in all my letters, every one!"

When, in 1806, Napoleon began the war with Prussia, he issued an order that every Frenchman serving in the enemy's ranks should, when taken prisoner, be tried by court-martial and shot within twenty-four hours. Hence

[1] "*He.* Then tell who you are!

"*I.* I am a man whose one and only aim has been the beautiful, the good, the true. I have never sacrificed to idols, never pandered to the foolish requirements of fashion; the pain caused by misunderstanding and scorn I have disregarded. In my wanderings, in my dreams, I have indeed often taken smoke for flame, but the moment I awoke I upheld what I knew to be the right. Can you say the same?

"*He* (with a wild, loud, grating laugh). *I* am not the man that *you* boast yourself to be, but one of a very different character. I am a cowardly, untruthful wretch, a hypocrite to myself and others; my heart is the home of selfishness, deceit is on my tongue. You misunderstood hero of the many sufferings, which of us is it that knows himself? which of us has given the true description? which is the real man? Come here and take my place if you dare? I am ready to make way for you.

"*I* (with horrible conviction). You are the man! Stay here and let me slink away!—— And out into the night I went, to weep."

Chamisso, who had in vain demanded to be allowed to resign his commission, was exposed to the chance of a disgraceful death.

He visited France in the following year, but in Paris there was nothing to attract him. "Wherever I am," he complains, "I am countryless. Land and people are foreign to me; hence I am perpetually longing." He was one of the bravest and most capable of German officers (his behaviour on the occasion of the surrender of Hameln proves this), but, as a Frenchman born and an admirer of Napoleon, he would have preferred not to have taken part in the war against France and the Emperor.

After his resignation was actually accepted, he spent some time at the court of Madame de Staël, and made the acquaintance of her international circle of friends. The year 1813, the year of Prussia's declaration of war against France, was the most trying of all for the unfortunate young Franco-German. His heart was divided; he desired the fall of Napoleon because he hated despotism, but at the same time he felt every humiliation which befell the French troops during their retreat from Russia, and every insulting word spoken of the Emperor, as if the misfortune had happened, the insult been offered, to himself. And with this very natural feeling his German associates showed no forbearance. He often cried despairingly: "No, the times have no sword for me." "Action and inaction," he writes in May 1813, "are equally painful to me."

This was the mood which produced his most notable work, *Peter Schlemihl.* The great historical events which harrowed his feelings made him intellectually productive; the summer of 1813 was a turning-point in his life. "I had no longer a country," he says, "or as yet no country." And so the man without a country writes the tale of the man without a shadow. In spite of its intangibility, a man's shadow is, like his country, like his home, one of his natural possessions, a thing which belongs to him from his birth, which is, as it were, part of him. In ordinary circumstances it is regarded as so entirely natural that a man should have a country, that it is hardly reckoned as a special possession,

but is, like his shadow, taken as a matter of course. Chamisso gave expression to all his sadness, to the great sorrow of his life, in his daringly imagined fable. And strangely enough, he not only figuratively gave in it the essence of all his past experiences, but also prophetically imaged his future, his voyage round the world and his scientific labours. After Schlemihl has escaped from the temptations of the devil, he accidentally comes into possession of the seven-leagued boots, which take him to every country in the world, and enable him to pursue his favourite study to the greatest advantage. Schlemihl himself says: "My future suddenly showed itself clearly to the eyes of my soul. Banished from human society by the misdemeanours of my youth, I was thrown into the arms of Nature, whom I had always loved. The earth was given to me as a rich garden, study as the directing influence and strength of my life, knowledge as its aim."

The originality of its plot and the remarkable clearness of its style (this last a characteristic of all Chamisso's writing, and evidently his intellectual inheritance as a Frenchman) made *Peter Schlemihl* an extraordinary success. It was translated into nearly every language. Ten years after its publication a new kind of lamp, which cast no shadow, was named the Schlemihl lamp.

Chamisso's success naturally roused Hoffmann to emulation. In the clever little *Story of the Lost Reflection*, the hero leaves his reflection in Italy with the entrancing Giulietta, who has bewitched him, and returns home to his wife without it. His little son, discovering suddenly one day that his father has no reflection, drops the mirror he is holding, and runs weeping from the room. The mother comes in with astonishment and fright written on every feature. "What is this Rasmus has been telling me about you?" she asks. "That I have no reflection, I suppose, my dear," answers Spikher with a forced laugh, and proceeds to try to prove that it is foolish to believe that a man can lose his reflection, but that even if the thing be possible, it is a matter of no importance, seeing that a reflection is simply an illusion. Self-contemplation only leads to vanity,

and, moreover, such an image splits up one's personality into truth and imagination.

Here we have the mirror chamber developed to such a point that the reflections move about independently, instead of following their originals. It is very amusing, very original and fantastic, and, as one is at liberty to understand by the reflection whatever one chooses, it may even be said to be very profound. I express no opinion, but simply draw attention to fact.

We have seen that the Romanticist is instinctively, inevitably, the enemy of clearly defined form in art. We have seen Hoffmann mixing up the different parts of his book to the extent of having part of one story on the front, part of quite a different one on the back of the same leaf; have seen Tieck composing dramas like so many puzzle balls one within the other, to prevent the reader taking them too *seriously*, and Kierkegaard fitting one author inside another in the Chinese box fashion, on the strength of the theory that truth can only be imparted indirectly, a theory which he ended by treating with scorn—we have seen, in a word, that the artistic standpoint of Romanticism is the exact opposite of the artistic standpoint of the ancients. And when, with their leaning to the supernatural, the Romanticists extend the personality of the individual throughout several successive generations, representing him as living before his birth and after his death, or represent him as a day-dreamer, half visionary and half madman, or humorously endow him with other men's attributes and despoil him of his own, fantastically filching now a shadow, now a reflection, they show by all this fantastic duplication and imagination that their psychological standpoint too, is an absolutely different one; for in the days of old both the work of art and the personality were whole, were of one piece. The movement is a perfectly consistent one, regarded as the antipodes of classicism, in short, as Romanticism.

But, granted that man is of necessity, by his very nature, a divided, complex being, he is nevertheless, as the healthy, vigorous personality, one. Aim, will, resolve, make him a complete unit. If, as a natural product, the human being

is only a group held more or less firmly together by association of ideas, as a mind he is a complete whole ; in his will all the elements of the mind are united. Romanticism only understood and depicted human nature with genius from the natural, from the night side. It made no closer approach in this than in any other of its endeavours to intellectual collectedness, unity, and liberty.

XII

ROMANTIC SOUL. NOVALIS

THE traveller who visits a mine is let down into a subterranean shaft in company with a man who carries a lamp, by the uncertain light of which they explore the hidden depths. It is on such an expedition that I now invite my readers to accompany me. The shaft to which we are about to descend is that of the German "soul," a mine as deep, as dark, as strange, as rich in precious metal and in worthless refuse as any other. We shall note the imprint received by this soul in the days of Romanticism, for this purpose dwelling at length on the Romanticist who above all others is the poet of the soul—Novalis.

No word in any other language is the exact equivalent of the German word "Gemüth," here translated "soul." "Gemüth" is something peculiarly German. It is the inward flame, the inward crucible. In the famous words of the "Wanderer's Sturmlied":—

> "Innre Wärme,
> Seelenwärme,
> Mittelpunkt!
> Glüh entgegen
> Phöb-Apollon,
> Kalt wird sonst
> Sein Fürstenblick
> Ueber dich vorübergleiten,"

Goethe has described soul, and its significance in the poet's life. With those who have soul, everything tends inwards; soul is the centripetal force of the spiritual life. To the man who sets soul above all else in human life, fervour becomes a patent of nobility. In their conception of soul, as in everything else, the Romanticists rush to extremes.

They magnify all that is mysterious, dark, and unexplained in the soul, at the expense of what is clear and beautiful. Goethe is to them the greatest of all poets, not because of his plastic power, but because of the obscurity, the dæmonic mystery, surrounding such characters as the Harper and Mignon, and because of the pregnant intensity of his smaller poems. Lessing and Schiller, on the other hand, are not deemed poets at all, and are sneered at and disparagingly criticised because of the outward direction taken by their keen, energetic thought. For enthusiasm, strength of character, and all such qualities are not soul. Soul remains at home when enthusiasm draws the sword and goes forth to war. To the Romanticists the greatest poet is he who has most soul.

The change which takes place in the case of the Romanticists is the turning of Goethe's "Seelenwärme"—warmth of soul—into heat, a heat which rises to the boiling or melting point, and in its intensity consumes all established forms and ideas. The glory of the Romantic poet is the heat and passion of the emotion which burns within him. What Novalis does is done with the force of his whole being. Intense, reckless feeling is his motto.

Friedrich von Hardenberg, a scion of an ancient house, was born at Wiederstedt, in the County of Mansfeld, in May 1772. His father, a man of a vigorous, ardent nature, had, after "leading a very worldly life," been converted at the age of thirty-one, when in great distress because of his first wife's death, to the faith of the English Methodists. At a later period he fell under the influence of the Moravian Brethren, more particularly of Count Zinzendorf; and he was at all times strongly influenced by his elder brother, a bigoted and somewhat ignorant aristocrat of pietistic leanings. The elder brother's will was law in the younger's household after the latter's second marriage; his strict principles forbade the family all social intercourse, and the children were obliged to keep their youthful amusements carefully concealed. In 1787 Novalis's father was appointed director of the saltworks in the little town of Weissenfels.

Tieck became acquainted with the Hardenberg family in 1799, and they made a profound impression on him. Köpke

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says: "It was a quiet, serious life that they led, a life of unostentatious but sincere piety. The family belonged to the sect of the Moravian Brethren, and set forth its doctrines in their lives. Old Hardenberg, a high-minded, honourable man, who had been a fine soldier in his day, lived like a patriarch among his talented sons and charming daughters. Change and enlightenment in any form were his detestation; he loved and lauded the good old, misjudged days, and on occasion could express his views very decidedly and defiantly, or blaze up in sudden anger."

The following little domestic scene speaks for itself:— Tieck one day heard the old gentleman fuming and scolding in the adjoining room. "What has happened?" he anxiously asked a servant who entered. "Nothing," was the dry response; "it is only the master giving a Bible lesson." Old Hardenberg was in the habit of conducting the devotional exercises of the family, and at the same time examining the younger children on religious subjects, and this not infrequently meant a domestic storm.

Such was Friedrich von Hardenberg's home. He was a dreamy, delicate child, an intelligent, ambitious youth. In 1791 he went to Jena to study law. Those were the palmy days of that university, which then numbered amongst its professors such men as Reinhold, Fichte, and Schiller. Novalis found Schiller's lectures specially spirit-stirring, and the poet himself was to the young man "the perfect pattern of humanity." Fichte, whose acquaintance he also made, he enthusiastically called "the legislator of the new world-order." No one at that time could have foreseen in young Hardenberg the future high priest of obscurantism.

We see him in those youthful days intensely absorbed in the study of his own Ego. His plans are constantly changing; at one time he determines to be the diligent, ardent student, at another to throw up the pursuit of science and be a soldier. Strange as it may sound, the men whom he at this time regards as his models are those friends of freedom who were at the same time apostles of the gospel of utilitarianism. He writes to his brother: "Buy Franklin's autobiography, and let the genius of this book be your

guide." We occasionally hear of a little youthful folly; he is now and again in trouble because of debts he has contracted; but he reasons very sensibly with his father, when the latter is inclined to take his peccadilloes too seriously.

Father and uncle naturally regarded the French Revolution with horror and loathing, but Friedrich and his elder brother were its ardent partisans.

Things in Saxony being on too small a scale to suit Friedrich's taste, his kinsman, the Prussian Minister (afterwards Chancellor) von Hardenberg, offered him an appointment in Prussia; this, however, he was unable to accept, owing to his father's unwillingness to allow him to become a member of the liberal-minded Berlin cousin's household. He was finally sent to Tennstedt, near Erfurt, to acquire practical experience of the administration of the laws of the Electorate of Saxony under the excellent district magistrate, Just.

Novalis's first friend among the Romanticists was Friedrich Schlegel, whose acquaintance he made at Jena. The two had much in common, and Novalis at once fell under Schlegel's influence. At the age of twenty-five he writes to him: "To me you have been the high priest of Eleusis; you have revealed heaven and hell to me; through you I have tasted of the tree of knowledge." Young Hardenberg shows himself to be entirely free from political prejudice; he takes a great fancy to Schlegel's landlord, because of the man's "honest republicanism," and jokes at Schlegel's severity in blaming him and the said landlord for their loyalty to the princely house. He has an extremely high opinion of Friedrich Schlegel as a critic, admires the fineness of the meshes of his critical net, which allows no fish, however small, to escape, and calls him "einen dephlogistisirten Lessing."

When, in 1797, Schlegel visited Hardenberg at his home, he found him utterly broken down. A young girl, Sophie von Kühn, to whom he had been passionately and absorbingly devoted, had just died. His despair took the form of longing for death, and he fully believed that his body must succumb to this desire and to his longing for the departed.

Though he had no definite plans of suicide, he called the desire for annihilation by which he was possessed, "a firm determination, which would make of his death a free-will offering." It was under the influence of these thoughts that he wrote his *Hymns to Night.*

This excess of despair, and also the singular circumstance that Sophie, who died at the age of fifteen, was only twelve years old when he fell in love with her, seem to testify to something unhealthy and abnormal in Novalis's character. The impression is strengthened when we find him, only one year later, betrothed to a daughter of Von Charpentier, superintendent of mines. It is quite true, as La Rochefoucauld says, that the strength of our passions has no relation to their durability; nevertheless it is strange that Hardenberg could suddenly console himself with another, after finding his one pleasure for a whole year in the thought of death, talking for a whole year as if the grave held everything that was dear to him. It was a somewhat lame excuse that Julie seemed to him a reincarnation of Sophie, though the fancy was not a surprising one, considering how much the Romanticists dwelt on the idea of a previous existence. But here, as elsewhere in Hardenberg's life, much that is apparently unnatural is easily explainable when the circumstances are rightly understood. Sophie von Kühn seems, like Auguste Böhmer, to have been a most precocious child. When the youth of twenty-three made her acquaintance, she possessed all the attractions of the child combined with those of the maiden. Her features were fine, her curly head was lightly poised, and there was a whole world in her large, dark, expressive eyes. More impartial judges than Hardenberg have called her "a heavenly creature."

Sophie's bright, hospitable home presented a striking contrast to young Hardenberg's own; he was fascinated (as was his elder brother) by the whole family; and the young girl, who, had she lived, would perhaps have disappointed him by turning out worldly or insignificant, became his muse, his Beatrice, his ideal. When we remember that, almost at the same time with Sophie, Hardenberg lost his

brother Erasmus, to whom he was united by an intimate and beautiful friendship, we cannot think it strange that life should have seemed to him to have lost all its charms. He regarded death not merely in the light of a release; his mystical tendency led him, as already mentioned, to speak of it as "a free-will offering." He wrote in his diary at this time: "My death will be a proof of my understanding and appreciation of what is highest; it will be a real sacrifice, not a flight nor a makeshift." It is at this crisis that he begins to turn in the direction of positive Christianity. Not that he dreamed of declaring allegiance to any particular Church, or belief in any particular set of dogmas, but his pagan longing for death assumed a Christian colouring. His inmost spiritual life had long been of such a nature that, had it not been for the influence of the spirit of the times, he might just as easily have become a determined opponent of all ecclesiastical doctrine. His state of mind seems to have been that indicated by Friedrich Schlegel when he wrote to him a year later: "Possibly you still have the choice, my friend, between being the last Christian, the Brutus of the old religion, or the Christ of the new gospel." Shortly after this his choice was made.

In December 1798 he still feels, when he compares himself with his friend Just, that he is only the apostle of pure spirituality. He does not, like Just, rely "with child-like mind upon the unalterable words of a mysterious ancient document;" he will not be bound by the letter, and is inclined to find his own way to the primeval world; in the doctrines of Christianity he sees an emblematic pre-figurement of the coming universal religion. "You will not," he writes to Just, "fail to recognise in this conception of religion one of the finest elements in my composition—namely, fancy." In other words, he consciously admits fancy to be at the source of his religious development.

In the same year (1798) he sent some fragments to Wilhelm Schlegel for publication in the *Athenæum*, with the request that their author might be known as NOVALIS, "which is an old family name, and not altogether unsuitable."

Tieck met Novalis for the first time when he visited Jena in the summer of 1799. August Wilhelm Schlegel brought them together, and they were soon devoted friends. The three spent the first evening in earnest conversation, opening their hearts to each other At midnight they went out to enjoy the splendour of the summer night. "The full moon," says Köpke, "was shedding a magic glory upon the heights round Jena." Towards morning Tieck and Schlegel accompanied Novalis home. Tieck has commemorated this evening in *Phantasus*.

It was under Tieck's influence that Novalis wrote his principal work, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. While he was still engaged upon it, his young life was put an end to by consumption. He died at the age of twenty-nine, only two years after the meeting with Tieck and A. W. Schlegel above described. This early death, a remarkable degree of originality, and great personal beauty have combined to shed a poetic halo round Novalis. The St. John of the new movement, he resembled the most spiritual of the apostles in outward appearance also. His forehead was almost transparent, and his brown eyes shone with remarkable brilliance. During the last three years of his life it could be read in his face that he was destined to an early death.

Novalis was seventeen when the French Revolution broke out. If one were asked to give a brief definition of the main idea of that great movement, one would say that it was the destruction of everything that was merely traditional, and the establishment of human existence upon a basis of pure reason, by means of a direct break with everything historic. The thinkers and heroes of the Revolution allow reason, as it were, to upset everything, in order that reason may put everything straight again. Although Novalis is deaf to all the social and political cries of the period, and blind to all its progressive movements, and although he ends in the most grim and repulsive reaction, he is, nevertheless, not merely influenced, but, all unconsciously, completely penetrated by the spirit of his age. Between him—the quiet, introspective, loyal Saxon assessor — and the poor *sans-culottes* who rushed from Paris to the frontiers, singing the

"Marseillaise" and waving the tricolour flag, there is this fundamental resemblance, that they both desire the destruction of the whole outward and the construction of an inward world. Only, their inward world is reason, his is soul: for them, reason with its demands and formulæ—liberty, equality, and fraternity; for him, the soul, with its strange nocturnal gloom, in which he melts down everything, to find, at the bottom of the crucible, as the gold of the soul—night, disease, mysticism, and voluptuousness.[1]

Thus, in spite of his violent animosity to his age, Novalis belongs to it; the direct opponent of all its enlightened and beautiful ideas, he is, despite himself, possessed by its spirit.

What in Fichte and the men of the Revolution is clear reason, comprehending and testing everything, is in Novalis an all-absorbing self-perception, which becomes actual voluptuousness; for the new spirit has taken such a hold upon him that it is, as it were, entwined round his nerves, causing a species of voluptuous excitement. What with them is abstract liberty, liberty to begin everything from the beginning again, with him is lawless fancy, which changes everything, which resolves nature and history into emblems and myths, in order to be able to play at will with all that is external, and to revel unrestrainedly in self-perception. As Arnold Ruge puts it: "Mysticism, which is theoretical voluptuousness, and voluptuousness, which is practical mysticism, are present in Novalis in equally strong proportions."

Novalis is himself thoroughly conscious that, in spite of all its would-be spirituality, his hectic imagination inclines towards the sensual. Writing to Caroline Schlegel on the subject of *Lucinde*, he says: "I know that imagination (Fantasie) is most attracted by what is most immoral, most animal; but I also know how like a dream all imagination is, how it loves night, meaninglessness, and solitude." He here affirms of imagination in general what applied particularly to his own.

Tieck writes with enthusiasm of music, as teaching us to *feel feeling*. Novalis is a living interpretation of these words.

[1] A. Ruge, *Werke*, i. 247, &c.

He, whose aim is feeling, unrestrained, irresponsible feeling, desires to feel himself, and makes no secret of the fact that he seeks this self-enjoyment. Therefore to him sickness is preferable to health. For the sick man perpetually feels his own body, which the healthy man does not. Pascal, and our own Kierkegaard, contented themselves with defining sickness as the Christian's natural condition. Novalis goes much further. To him the highest, the only true life, is the life of the sick man. "*Leben ist eine Krankheit des Geistes*" ("Life is a disease of the spirit"). Why? Because only in living individuals does the world-spirit feel itself, attain to self-consciousness. And no less highly than disease does Novalis prize voluptuousness, sensual rapture. Why? Because it is simply an excited, and therefore in his eyes diseased, self-consciousness, a wavering struggle between pleasure and pain. "Could man," he says, "but begin to love sickness and suffering, he would perhaps in their arms experience the most delicious rapture, and feel the thrill of the highest positive pleasure. . . . Does not all that is best begin as illness? Half-illness is an evil; real illness is a pleasure, and one of the highest." And he writes elsewhere of a mystic power, "which seems to be the power of pleasure and pain, the enrapturing effect of which we observe so distinctly in the sensations of voluptuousness."

To Novalis's voluptuous feeling of sickness corresponds the pietist's conviction of sin, that spiritual sickness which is at the same time a voluptuous pleasure. Novalis himself is perfectly aware of this correspondence. He says: "The Christian religion is the most voluptuous of religions. Sin is the greatest stimulant to love of the Divine Being; the more sinful a man feels himself to be, the more Christian he is. Direct union with the Deity is the aim of sin and of love." And again: "It is curious that the evident association between sensuality, religion, and cruelty did not long ago draw men's attention to their close kinship and common tendencies."

And just as Novalis now prefers sickness to health, so he prefers night to day, with its "impudent light."

Aversion for day and daylight was general among the

Romanticists. I drew attention to it in *William Lovell.* Novalis simply gives expression to a heightened degree of the general feeling in his famous *Hymns to Night.* That he should love the night is easy to understand. By hiding the surrounding world from it, night drives the Ego in upon itself; hence the feeling of night, and self-consciousness, are one and the same thing. The rapture of the feeling of night lies in its terror; first comes the fear of the individual, when everything round him disappears in the darkness, that he will himself disappear from himself; then comes the pleasant shudder when, out of this fear, self-consciousness emerges stronger than before.

In one of his fragments Novalis calls death a bridal night, a sweet mystery, and adds:—

> "Ist es nicht klug, für die Nacht ein geselliges Lager zu suchen?
> Darum ist klüglich gesinnt, wer auch Entschlummerte liebt." [1]

So completely is this idea incorporated in the Romantic philosophy of life, that in Werner's drama, *Die Kreuzesbrüder*, the hero, immediately before he is led to the stake, says:—

> "Den Neid verzeih' ich,
> Die Trauer nicht.—O unaussprechlich schwelg' ich
> In der Verwandlung Wonn', in dem Gefühl
> Des schönen Opfertodes!—O mein Bruder!
> Nicht wahr? es kommt die Zeit, wo alle Menschen
> Den Tod erkennen—freudig ihn umarmen,
> Und fühlen werden, dass dies Leben nur
> Der Liebe Ahnung ist, der Tod ihr Brautkuss,
> Und sie, die mit der Inbrunst eines Gatten,
> Im Brautgemach, uns vom Gewand entkleidet—
> Verwesung, Gluterguss der Liebe ist!" [2]

Life and death are to Novalis only "relative ideas." The dead are half alive, the living half dead. It is this

[1] "We deem that man wise who seeks a companion for his nightly couch; then he also is wise who has a beloved among the dead."

[2] "I forgive envy; pity I cannot forgive. It is beyond my power to tell how I revel in the thought of my approaching transfiguration, my sacrificial death. O brother! the time is surely drawing nigh when all men, truly understanding death, will welcome him with glad embrace, will feel that life is but the anticipation of love, that death is the bridal kiss, and dissolution, which with a bridegroom's ardour disrobes us in the bridal chamber, the hottest fire of love."

thought which in his case first gives zest to existence. In the first of his Hymns to Night he writes: "I turn to thee, holy, ineffable, mysterious Night! Far off lies the world, as if it had sunk into a deep grave; deserted and lonely is its place. My heart-strings vibrate with sorrow. . . . Dost thou find pleasure in us as we in thee, dark Night? . . . Costly balsam drips from thy hand, from thy poppy-sheaf. Thou unfoldest the heavy wings of the soul. . . . How poor, how childish seems the day, how joyful and blessed its departing! . . . More heavenly than those sparkling stars are the myriad eyes which Night opens in us. They see farther than the palest of those countless hosts; without the aid of light, they see into the depths of a loving soul, and its high places are filled with unspeakable rapture. Praised be the Queen of the earth, the august revealer of holy worlds, the guardian of blessed love! She sends me thee, my beloved, sweet sun of the night. Now I wake, for I am thine and mine. Thou hast proclaimed to me the life-giving gospel of Night, hast made of me a human being. Consume my body with the glowing flame of the spirit, that I may mingle yet more ethereally, yet more closely with thee, and the bridal-night be eternal."

One feels the feverish desire of the consumptive in this outburst. The parallel passage in *Lucinde* is: "O infinite longing! But a time is coming when the fruitless desire and vain delusions of the day will die away and disappear, and the great night of love bring eternal peace." The thoughts of these two Romantic lovers of the night meet in this idea of an eternal embrace.

In this enthusiasm for night lies the germ of religious mysticism. In the case of Justinus Kerner (which recalls that of Jung Stilling), bias towards the mysterious becomes belief in apparitions and fear of spirits. In certain of the writings of the later Romanticists, for instance in Achim von Arnim's *Die schöne Isabella von Ægypten*, half the characters are spirits. Mysticism is a fundamental element in the art of Clemens Brentano, even when he is at his best, and it gives charm and colour to his descriptions.

Novalis himself describes mysticism as voluptuousness

—"ein wollüstiges Wesen." To understand this expression aright, we must study his hymns:—

"Hinüber wall' ich
Und jede Pein
Wird einst ein Stachel
Der Wollust sein.
Noch wenig Zeiten
So bin ich los,
Und liege trunken
Der Lieb' im Schoss." [1]

Still plainer expression is given to the ecstatic passion of the sensual Ego in a sacramental hymn (No. vii. of the *Spiritual Songs*): "Few know the secret of love, feel for ever unsatisfied, for ever athirst. The divine significance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is an enigma to the carnal mind. But he who even once has drunk in the breath of life from warm, beloved lips, whose heart has melted in the quivering flames of holy fire, whose eyes have been opened to fathom the unfathomable depths of heaven—he will eat of His body and drink of His blood for ever more. Who has yet discerned the transcendent meaning of the earthly body? Who can say that he understands the blood? The day is coming when all body will be one body; then the beatified pair will float in heavenly blood. Oh! that the ocean were already reddening, that the rocks were softening into fragrant flesh! The sweet repast never ends, love is never satisfied. Never can it have the beloved near enough, close enough to its inmost self. By lips that are ever more tenderly amorous, the heavenly nutriment is ever more eagerly seized and transformed. Hotter and hotter burns the passion of the soul, thirstier, ever thirstier grows the heart; and so the feast of love endures from everlasting to everlasting. Had those who abstain but once tasted of it, they would forsake everything and seat themselves beside us at the table of longing, which is ever furnished with guests. They would comprehend the infinite ful-

[1] "Thither I go, and there every pain will be a thrill of rapture. Ere long I shall be free, be lying, intoxicated with ecstasy, in the bosom of love."

ness of love, and extol our feast of the Body and the Blood." [1]

These lines give us an excellent idea of the nature and main characteristics of mysticism. Mysticism retains all the old religious forms, but it truly *feels* their significance; it speaks the same language as orthodoxy, but it changes a dead language into a living one. Herein lay the secret of its victory in the Middle Ages over that dry, formal scholasticism which it consumed in its glow. This made it the precursor of the Reformation. The mystic needs no ex-

[1] "Wenige wissen
Das Geheimnis der Liebe,
Fühlen Unersättlichkeit
Und ewigen Durst.
Des Abendmahls
Göttliche Bedeutung
Ist den irdischen Sinnen Rätsel;
Aber wer jemals
Von heissen, geliebten Lippen
Atem des Lebens sog,
Wem heilige Glut
In zitternden Wellen das Herz schmolz
Wem das Auge aufging,
Dass er des Himmels
Unergründliche Tiefe mass,
Wird essen von seinem Leibe
Und trinken von seinem Blute
Ewiglich.
Wer hat des irdischen Leibes
Hohen Sinn erraten?
Wer kann sagen
Dass er das Blut versteht?
Einst ist Alles Leib—
Ein Leib,
In himmlischem Blute
Schwimmt das selige Paar.
O! dass das Weltmeer
Schon errötete,
Und in duftiges Fleisch
Aufquölle der Fels!
Nie endet das süsse Mahl,
Nie sättigt die Liebe sich;
Nicht innig, nicht eigen genug
Kann sie haben den Geliebten.
Von immer zärteren Lippen
Verwandelt wird das Genossene

ternal dogma; in his pious rapture he is his own priest. But, as his spiritual life is altogether an inward life, he does not abolish external dogma, and in the end actually becomes a sacerdotalist.

In mystically prophetic words Novalis foretells the coming of the new kingdom of sacred darkness:—

"Es bricht die neue Welt herein
Und verdunkelt den hellsten Sonnenschein.
Man sieht nun aus bemoosten Trümmern
Eine wunderseltsame Zukunft schimmern,
Und was vordem alltäglich war,
Scheint jetzo fremd und wunderbar.
Der Liebe Reich ist aufgethan,
Die Fabel fängt zu spinnen an.
Das Urspiel jeder Natur beginnt,
Auf kräftige Worte jedes sinnt,
Und so das grosse Weltgemüth
Ueberall sich regt und unendlich blüht.
. . . . . .
Die Welt wird Traum, der Traum wird Welt,
Und was man glaubt, es sei geschehn,
Kann mann von weitem erst kommen sehn;
Frei soll die Phantasie erst schalten,
Nach ihrem Gefallen die Fäden verweben,
Hier manches verschleiern, dort manches entfalten,
Und endlich in magischem Dunst verschweben.
Wehmuth und Wollust, Tod und Leben

Inniglicher und näher.
Heissere Wollust
Durchbebt die Seele,
Durstiger und durstiger
Wird das Herz:
Und so währet der Liebe Genuss
Von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit.
Hätten die Nüchternen
Einmal gekostet,
Alles verliessen sie,
Und setzten sich zu uns
An den Tisch der Sehnsucht,
Der nie leer wird.
Sie erkännten der Liebe
Unendliche Fülle,
Und priesen die Nahrung
Von Leib und Blut."

Sind hier in innigster Sympathie,—
Wer sich der höchsten Lieb' ergeben,
Genest von ihren Wunden nie." [1]

Night, death, sensual rapture, heavenly bliss — these ideas are still more firmly interwoven in the verses above the churchyard gate, in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. The dead say :—

" Süsser Reiz der Mitternächte,
Stiller Kreis geheimer Mächte,
Wollust räthselhafter Spiele,
Wir nur kennen euch.
. . . . .
Leiser Wünsche süsses Plaudern
Hören wir allein, und schauen
Immerdar in sel'ge Augen,
Schmecken nichts als Mund und Kuss.
Alles was wir nur berühren,
Wird zu heissen Balsamfrüchten,
Wird zu weichen zarten Brüsten,
Opfern kühner Lust.

Immer wächst und blüht Verlangen
Am Geliebten festzuhangen,
Ihn im Innern zu empfangen,
Eins mit ihm zu sein.
Seinem Durste nicht zu wehren,
Sich im Wechsel zu verzehren,
Von einander sich zu nähren,
Von einander nur allein.

So in Lieb' und hoher Wollust
Sind wir immerdar versunken,
Seit der wilde trübe Funken
Jener Welt erlosch ;

---

[1] " The new world appears, *and darkens the brightest sunshine.* Among moss-grown ruins one sees a marvellous future glistening ; and what used to be common and everyday, now seems miraculous. The kingdom of love has come ; the fable has begun to weave itself. Every soul is born again ; words of power are heard again ; the great world-soul moves, and puts forth bud and blossom without end. . . .

" The world becomes a dream, our dream the world ; and what we believed to have happened long ago, we now see only coming, as yet far off. Imagination must have free play, must weave her web as seems best to her, here veiling, there discovering, at last dissolving all into magic vapour. Sadness and rapture, death and life, are here by inmost sympathy but one : he who has known the highest love never recovers from its wounds."

Seit der Hügel sich geschlossen
Und der Scheiterhaufen sprühte,
Und dem schauernden Gemüthe
Nun das Erdgesicht zerfloss."[1]

This mysticism, which deems the dead happy because it supposes them to be revelling in all sensual delights, becomes, in its practical application, a sort of quietism, that is, preference for a vegetating, plant-like life, the life extolled in *Lucinde*.

"The plants," says Novalis, "are the plainest speech of the earth; every new leaf, every remarkable flower is some mystery which is trying to reveal itself, and which remains motionless and dumb only because from very joy and love it can neither move nor speak. If one chances in solitude upon such a flower, does not everything around it seem transfigured? do not the little feathered songsters seem to seek its vicinity? One could weep for gladness, and, forgetting the world, could bury one's hands and feet in the ground, take root, and never leave that happy neighbourhood."

What an overdose of sentiment! It provides its own cruel parody in the insane situation which reminds us Danes of one in Holberg's *Ulysses von Ithacia*.

In another part of *Ofterdingen* we read: "Flowers exactly correspond to children . . . like children they are found lowest down, nearest the earth; the clouds, again, are possibly revelations of the second, higher childhood, of Paradise regained; therefore it is that they shed such refreshing dews upon the children of earth." In the Romantic jargon there is even talk of the childlikeness of clouds.

[1] "Sweet joys of midnight, silent company of mysterious powers, strange revelries of passion, 'tis we alone who know you. . . .

"We alone hear the whispered prayers of sweet desire, and look for ever into blissful eyes, taste for ever mouth and kiss. All that we touch turns into balsamic fruits, into soft and lovely breasts, ripe food for our desire.

"Anew and ever anew awakes our longing to embrace, to be one with, the beloved, to give him whate'er he asks, sweetly to consume each other, to feed on each other, and on nought else.

"In this voluptuous passion we have revelled ever since the glaring light of earthly life was extinguished, since the faggot flamed, the grave closed on us, and the sights of earth were hidden from the shuddering soul."

Naïveté aspires, and is not satisfied until it has reached the sky. O Polonius!—These naïve clouds are the true, the proper symbols of Romanticism.

But even in the plants and the clouds there is still too much endeavour and unrest to satisfy the Romantic soul. Even vegetation is not perfect abstraction, perfect quiescence; there is tendency upwards in the straining of the plant towards the light. Therefore even the plant life is not the highest. Novalis goes a step further than Friedrich Schlegel.

"The highest life is mathematics. Without enthusiasm no mathematics. The life of the gods is mathematics. Pure mathematics is religion. It is arrived at only by revelation. The mathematician knows everything. All activity ceases when knowledge is attained. The state of knowledge is bliss (Eudämonie), rapturous peace of contemplation, heavenly abstraction."

Now we have reached the climax. All life is crystallised into dead mathematical figures.

At this point the life of the soul is condensed to such a degree that it comes to a standstill. It is as if the clock of the soul had ceased to strike. Every noble aspiration, every tendency towards independent action is forced back and stifled in the airless vaults of the soul.

It is at this point, therefore, that intense spirituality turns into gross materialism. When all capacity of producing new outward forms is not only despised, but actually destroyed, we have reached the turning-point, the point at which all established outward forms are recognised and accepted, and accepted the more gladly the more rigid they are, the closer they approach to crystallised petrifaction, the more certain it is that they only leave room for the life of vegetation. The step is taken by Novalis in a remarkable essay, *Christendom in Europe*, which Tieck by his erasures vainly tried to nullify, and which Friedrich Schlegel, by leaving out one most important passage, converted into a defence of Catholicism.

In this essay he writes as follows:—"These were happy, glorious days, when Europe was still a Christian continent,

the home of the one, undivided Christian religion. . . . The wise head of the Church rightly set himself against the bold cultivation of the human mind at the cost of religious faith, and against untimely and dangerous discoveries in the domain of science. Thus he forbade the scientists to maintain openly that this earth is an insignificant planet, for he knew well that men would lose, along with their respect for their earthly home, respect for their heavenly home and their fellow-men, that they would choose limited knowledge in preference to unlimited faith, and would acquire the habit of despising everything great and wonderful, as being simply the result of lifeless law."

We could almost suppose ourselves to be listening to the sermonising of a parish-clerk of the eighteenth century. And yet we are sensible of the poet's consistency. Poetry, which led Schiller back to Greece, leads Novalis back to the Inquisition, and induces him, like Joseph de Maistre, to side with it against Galileo.

Of Protestantism he says: "This great spiritual disruption, which was accompanied by disastrous wars, was a notable proof of the harmfulness of knowledge, of culture —or at least of the temporary harmfulness of a certain degree of culture. . . . The schismatics separated the inseparable, divided the indivisible Church, and presumptuously dissociated themselves from the great Christian communion, in which, and through which alone, true, lasting regeneration was possible. . . . A religious peace was concluded, based upon principles which were as foolish as they were irreligious; for the continued existence of so-called Protestantism was equivalent to the establishment of a self-contradiction, namely, permanent revolutionary government. . . . Luther treated Christianity arbitrarily, mistook its spirit, and introduced a new letter, a totally new doctrine, that of the sacred and supreme authority of the Bible. This, unfortunately, meant the interference in religious matters of a perfectly foreign, entirely earthly science, namely, philology, the destructive influence of which is thenceforward unmistakable. . . . The popularisation of the Bible was now insisted upon, and its contemptible matter and the crude abstract sketch of a religion provided by its

books had a remarkable effect in frustrating the inspiring, revealing activity of the Holy Spirit. . . . The Reformation was the death-blow of Christianity. . . . Fortunately for the Church, there came into existence at this time a new religious order, on which the expiring spirit of the hierarchy seemed to have bestowed its last gifts. This order gave new life to the old forms, and with wonderful intuition and determination set about the restoration of the Papal power. Never before in the world's history had such a society been known. . . . The Jesuits were well aware how much Luther owed to his demagogic arts and his knowledge of the common people. . . . From of old, the scholar has been the instinctive enemy of the priest ; the learned and the ecclesiastical professions must carry on a war of extermination against each other so long as they are separated ; for they are struggling for the same position. . . . To the outcome of modern thought men gave the name of philosophy ; and under philosophy they comprehended everything that was hostile to the old order of things, consequently every attack upon religion. What was at first personal hatred of the Roman Catholic Church became by degrees hatred of the Bible, of the Christian faith, indeed of all religion."

We see how clearly Novalis understood that free-thought was a consequence of Protestantism. He continues :—

"Nay, more ; the hatred of religion developed naturally and inevitably into a hatred of all enthusiasms, denounced imagination and feeling, morality and love of art, the past and the future, barely acknowledged man to be the highest among the animals, and reduced the creative music of the universe to the monotonous whirr of an enormous mill, driven by the stream of chance—a mill without a builder or miller, a true *perpetuum mobile*. . . . One enthusiasm was magnanimously left to mankind, enthusiasm for this glorious philosophy and its priests. France had the good fortune to be the seat of this new faith, which was patched together out of fragments of knowledge. . . . On account of its obedience to the laws of mathematics and its audacity, light was the idol of these men. . . . The history of modern

unbelief is very remarkable, and is the key to all the monstrous phenomena of these later days. It only begins in this century, is little noticeable till the middle of it, and then quickly develops with incalculable force in every direction; a second, more comprehensive and more remarkable Reformation was inevitable, and of necessity came first in the country which was most modernised and had suffered longest from want of freedom. . . . During this anarchy religion was born again, true anarchy being its generating element. . . . To the reflective observer the overthrower of the state is a Sisyphus. No sooner does he reach the summit, where there is equipoise, than the mighty burden rolls down on the other side. It will never remain up there unless it is kept in position by an attraction towards heaven. All your supports are too weak as long as your state has a tendency towards the earth."

He enthusiastically predicts the coming age of "soul." "In Germany we can already point to sure indications of a new world. . . . Here and there, and often in daring union, are to be found incomparable versatility, brilliant polish, extensive knowledge, and rich and powerful imagination. A strong feeling of the creative arbitrariness, the boundlessness, the infinite many-sidedness, the sacred originality, and the unlimited capacity of the human spirit is taking possession of men. . . . Although these are only indications, disconnected and crude, they nevertheless discover to the historic eye a universal individuality, new history, a new humanity, the sweet embrace of a loving God and a young, surprised Church, and the conception of a new Messiah in the hearts of all the many thousands of that Church's members. Who does not, with sweet shame, feel himself pregnant? The child will be the express image of the father—a new golden age, with dark, fathomless eyes; a prophetic, miracle-working, comforting age, which will kindle the flame of eternal life; a great reconciler, a saviour who, like a spirit taking up his abode amongst men, will only be believed in, not seen, will appear to the faithful in innumerable forms, will be consumed as bread and wine, embraced as the beloved, inhaled as the air, heard as word and song, received as death with

voluptuous ecstasy and love's keenest pain, into the inmost recesses of the dissolving body."

After occupying ourselves so long with voluptuous rapture, bliss, religion, night, and death, do we not instinctively cry: "Air! light!" We seem to be suffocating. This "soul" in truth resembles the shaft of a mine. Novalis's love for the miner's life, in which smoky red lanterns replace the light of day, is not without significance. And what is the upshot of it all? What new being is the result of the embraces of a loving God and a young, surprised Church? What but a regenerated reaction, which in France restored Catholicism and (after Napoleon's fall) the Bourbons, and in Germany led to that hateful tyranny which gave pietism the same power there that Catholicism exercised in France, cast young men into prison, and drove the best writers of the day into exile.

Novalis relegated everything to the inner life, the inner world. It engulfed everything, the forces of the Revolution and of the counter-revolution; in it all the lions of the spirit lay bound; in it the Titanic powers of history were shut up and hypnotised. Night surrounded them; they felt the voluptuous joys of darkness and death; the life they lived was the life of a plant, and in the end they turned into stone. In the inner world lay all the wealth of the spirit, but it was dead treasure, inert masses, ingeniously crystallized according to mathematical laws. It was like the gold and silver in the inward parts of the earth, and the poet was the miner who was spirited down into the depths and rejoiced in all that he saw.

But while he stayed down below, things in the upper world pursued their usual course. The outer world was not in the least disturbed because the poet and the philosopher were employed in taking it to pieces in the inner world. For they did not go to work in the rough, material fashion of a Mirabeau or a Bonaparte; they only disintegrated it inwardly in an inner world. When the poet, released by the spirits, came up from the mine again, he found the outer world, which he supposed he had resolved into its elements, exactly as it had been before. All that he had melted in his

heart stood there, hard and cold ; and, since the outer world had never really interested him, and since it seemed to him almost as night-like, murky, and drowsy as his inner world, he gave it his blessing and let it stand.

The prophetic quality in Novalis, his peculiar type of personal beauty, his genuine lyric talent, and his early death, have led critics to compare him with Shelley, who was born twenty years after him. Quite lately, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Blaze de Bury drew attention to the resemblance. He writes: "Shelley's poetry has a strong resemblance to Novalis's, and the likeness between these two singular poets is not only a physical one ; common to them both are close observation of nature, divination of all her little secrets, a choice combination of sentiment with philosophical thought, an utter want of tangibility, reflections, but no body, a mounting upwards, an aspiration, that leads nowhere."

These resemblances, however, do not affect the great fundamental unlikeness, the diametrically opposed spiritual standpoints of these two poets of such an apparently similar cast of mind, one of whom lives before, the other after the great spiritual revulsion of the beginning of this century.

Think of Shelley's life in its main outlines. The son of a good family, he was sent to an aristocratic school, where, while yet a child, he was roused to wrath and opposition by the brutality of the boys and the cruelty of the masters. What especially kindled his indignation as he grew older was the hypocrisy with which those who gave free rein to their bad passions perpetually talked of God and Christianity. During his second year at Oxford, Shelley wrote an essay *On the Necessity of Atheism*, of which, with naïve straightforwardness, he sent copies to the Church and University authorities. He was summoned before them, and, on refusing to retract what he had written, was expelled for atheism. He went home, but his father received him with such contemptuous coldness that he soon left again, never to return. His whole life was a tissue of similar rebellions and similar misfortunes. In his twentieth year he was threatened with consumption, and though he recovered, he was thenceforward a delicate, nervously irri-

table man. The Court of Chancery refused him the guardianship of his own children (after the death of his first wife) on the ground that he had propagated immoral and irreligious doctrines in *Queen Mab*. After this he left England for ever, and lived in Italy in voluntary exile until sudden death put an end to his sad and homeless existence. His boat was capsized in a squall in the Gulf of Spezzia, and he was drowned, at the age of twenty-nine.

In contrast with such a life as this, Hardenberg's is a true German country-town idyll. At the age of twenty-five he received a Government appointment, an auditorship at one of the state saltworks, and a year or two later he was advanced to be "assessor" at the saltworks of Weissenfels. His Romanticism in no way interfered with his fulfilment of his duties as a good citizen. In his capacity of Government official he was zealous, conscientious, and steady—one of the men who do their duty and are guilty of no extravagances, and whose position is consequently assured. His republicanism was short-lived, and he is only saved by his naïveté from the charge of servility. He calls Frederick William and Louisa of Prussia "ein klassisches Menschenpaar;" in the revelation of these "geniuses" he sees an omen of a better world. Frederick William is, he says, the first king of Prussia; he crowns himself every day. A real "transubstantiation" has taken place; for the court has been transformed into a family, the throne into a sanctuary, a royal marriage into an eternal union of hearts. Only youthful prejudice, he maintains, inclines to a republic; the married man desires order, safety, quietness, a well-regulated household, a "real monarchy." "A constitution has for us only the interest of a dead letter. How different is the law which is the expression of the will of a beloved and revered person! We have no right to conceive of the monarch as the first officer of the state; he is not a citizen, and cannot therefore be an official. The king is a human being exalted to the position of an earthly providence."

If we compare such utterances as the above with those of Shelley's poems which were inspired by the tyranny prevailing in his native country, or those in which he glorifies

the Italian revolutions and the Greek war of liberation, we have the sharpest imaginable contrast. And the same contrast meets us wherever we turn. Novalis sings the praises of sickness. Shelley says: "It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of this earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man."

Novalis says: "We picture God to ourselves as a person, just as we think of ourselves as persons. God is exactly as personal and individual as we are." Shelley says: "There is no God! This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit, co-eternal with the universe, remains unshaken. . . . It is impossible to believe that the Spirit which pervades this infinite machine begat a son upon the body of a Jewish woman, or is angered by the consequences of that necessity which is a synonym of itself. All that miserable tale of the Devil, and Eve, and an Intercessor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews, is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of his fingers have borne witness against him."

Novalis sings the praises of the priesthood and of the Jesuits. Shelley says: "During many ages of darkness and misery this story" (the doctrine of the Bible) "gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a God, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men who derived, and still derive, immense emoluments from this opinion, told the vulgar that if they did not believe in the Bible they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiassed and unconnected inquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow. . . . The same means that have supported every popular belief have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood, deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity, have made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of his religion,

would probably suffice to drown all other sectaries now on the habitable globe."

From these extracts, to which innumerable others of the same tendency might be added, we see how great was the distance between Novalis, with his introspective soul-life, and Shelley, with his practical enthusiasm for liberty.

These, then, are the two poets whom men have attempted to represent as twin spirits. They both rank high as lyric poets, though Shelley is a poetical genius of a far higher type than Novalis. But even if Novalis were more on a level with Shelley as a poet, how small is the measure of truth to be found in his works compared with that in Shelley's!

To Novalis, truth was poetry and dream; to Shelley, it was liberty. To Novalis it was a firmly established and powerful Church; to Shelley a struggling, sorely-pressed heresy; Novalis's truth sat on royal and papal thrones; Shelley's was despised and powerless.

To make any real impression on humanity, a truth, however great, must be made man, must become flesh and blood. In the early biographies of Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, we are told that in July 1703 he was condemned, as author of a certain pamphlet, first to have his ears cut off and then to be pilloried. The day came, the sentence was carried out, the man with the pale, mutilated face, dripping with blood, stood in the pillory, facing the assembled multitude. Then, strange to say, in place of the usual loud hooting, with its accompaniment of showers of rotten apples, eggs, potatoes, &c., there fell a dead silence; not an apple was thrown, not one abusive word was heard—Defoe was far too dear to the hearts of the people. Presently one of the crowd, hoisted on his neighbours' shoulders, placed a wreath upon the mutilated head. I read this when I was a boy, and though I know now that Defoe did not lose his ears, so that Pope was mistaken when he wrote—

"Earless on high stood unabashed Defoe;"

and though I also know that Defoe was not the pure character I took him to be at that time, still the picture remains

a grand one, and it has burned itself into my soul. For it contains an eternal verity. As a general rule, truth upon this earth presents much such an appearance as did the condemned author in the pillory. And I remember thinking to myself at the time: "If a man chanced to find such a poor, despised, oppressed truth in the pillory, what a great moment in his life it would be if he might draw near and place the wreath upon its brow!" Shelley did this—Novalis did not.

XIII

LONGING—"THE BLUE FLOWER"

I HAVE described Romantic "soul" as intensity, without endeavour or desire, as the glowing furnace in which liberty was asphyxiated and every tendency to outward action destroyed. But this is not the exact truth. One outward tendency remained, that which is known by the name of "longing" (Sehnsucht). Longing is the Romantic equivalent of endeavour, and the mother of all Romantic poetry. What is longing? It is a combination of lack and desire, without the determination or the means to attain what one lacks and desires. And what is the object of this longing? What but that which is the object of all longing and desire, in however fine or hypocritical words it may clothe itself — enjoyment and happiness. The Romanticist does not employ the word happiness, but it is what he means. He does not say happiness, he says "the ideal." But do not let us be deceived by words. The special characteristic of the Romanticist, however, is not his search after happiness, but his belief that it exists, that it must be in store for him, and that it will come to him when he least expects it. And since it is the gift of Heaven, since he himself is not its creator, he may lead as aimless a life as he will, guided only by his vague longing. All that is necessary is to preserve his faith that this longing will be satisfied. And it is a faith easy to preserve, for everything around him is full of omens and prophecies of the accomplishment of his desire.

It was Novalis who gave to the object of Romantic longing the famous, mystic name of "the blue flower." The expression is, of course, not to be understood literally. The "blue flower" is a mysterious symbol, something of the

nature of ΙΧΘΥΣ, the Fish of the early Christians. It is an abbreviation, a condensed formulation of all that infinitude of bliss for which a languishing human heart is capable of longing. Hence glimpses of it are caught long before it is reached; it is dreamed of long before it is seen; it is divined now here, now there, in what proves to be a delusion, is seen for a moment amongst other flowers, only to vanish immediately; but its fragrance is perceptible, at times only faint, at times strong, and the seeker is intoxicated by it. Though, like the butterfly, he flutters from flower to flower, settling now upon a violet, now upon some tropical plant, he is always seeking and longing for the one thing—perfect, ideal happiness.

It is with this longing and its object that Novalis's principal work deals. It is a work which we must study, and, to understand it aright, we must first see how it came into existence.

Its germ is contained in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, and we can clearly trace the mental processes by which *Wilhelm Meister* is slowly transmuted into *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. Wilhelm does not act, he is acted upon. He does not strive, he longs. He pursues ideals, seeking them first on the stage, then in real life. Wilhelm too, is the offspring of "soul." The book is pervaded by soul. It is not only that the characters, like those of many modern English novels (some of Dickens's, for instance), are full of soul, but there is, as it were, soul in the peculiar, hazy atmosphere which surrounds them. No feature is realistically coarse or decided; the children of soul have soft contours. Heiberg once summed up Goethe's philosophy, of which he himself was a disciple, in the following sentence: "Goethe is neither immoral nor irreligious, in the general acceptation of the word, but he shows that there are no unconditional laws of duty, and that we must place our religion on the same level as our poetry and philosophy." We are struck in reading *Wilhelm Meister* by the manner in which rigid school or text-book ethics, the narrow-minded, conventional ideas of morality and equity, are so re-moulded that morality is no longer regarded as the absolute law of life,

but simply as an important principle of life, one among others all equally legitimate and equally under control—just as the brain of the animal, important as it is, is not, in the estimation of the physiologist, the one part of consequence, but simply an organ, fulfilling its task in association with the heart, the liver, and the other organs. Hence sensuality is not abused as animal, but (in Philine) simply and straightforwardly represented as pleasant and attractive. The harmonious development of Wilhelm's nature is arrived at by the aid of many doubtful experiences. In the female characters we are called on to admire well-bred self-possession and the innate nobility of a beautiful nature; the physical and mental superiority and freedom which are the result of a highly favoured and assured position, are sympathetically portrayed in the personages of rank. It may seem objectionable to us nowadays that "noble" and "aristocratic" are evidently often regarded as synonyms, but the reason for it is to be sought in the deplorable, straitened social conditions of the Germany of Goethe's day. As the tale is not the offspring of the union of imagination and reality, but of imagination and "soul," there is something unreal in its whole character; much is veiled, much refined away; everything is so idealised that the material world stands, as it were, in the shadow of the spiritual.

Only private circumstances and persons are dealt with. War is, indeed, alluded to, and in such a manner that we are enabled to conclude that the war following on the French Revolution is meant; but nothing definite is said about it. As to the locality, we are led to the conclusion that it is somewhere in Central Germany; but the landscape possesses no marked features, it only chimes in like a faint musical accompaniment to the mood. In the world depicted in the tale, art is regarded, in the perverted fashion of the day, as the school of life, instead of life as the school of art; national, historical events are but "etwas Theatergeräusch hinter den Koulissen" (a little noise behind the scenes).[1] None of the characters have any practical aim in view; they are simply driven onward by the current

[1] Auerbach: *Deutsche Abende.*

of their longings and moods; they wander about, untrammelled by circumstances, heedless of the boundaries of countries, leading "planless" existences.

Goethe's avoidance of all psychological extremes is a significant witness to the centripetal tendency of "soul." Such an extreme is crime, conceived of as criminal. Even where Goethe touches upon the horrible, as, for example, incestuous passion (the story of the Harper), his desire is only that we should be powerfully affected, not that we should judge; he does not bring the case before the moral, much less before the legal tribunal. And the story loses some of its painfulness from the manner in which it is communicated to us. We do not hear it from the Harper himself; his lips are sealed; it is told us after his death by a stranger.

It is in this highly idealised world, on which the poet's hand has set the seal of beauty, that Wilhelm wanders about, without a plan, but not without an aim. He is in pursuit of the ideal—an ideal profession, an ideal woman, ideal culture. He is first a merchant, then an actor, then a doctor; loves first Marianne, then the Countess, then Therese, then Nathalie. His first ideal of culture is experience, his second intellectual refinement; then he seeks it in renunciation; and he ends with experiments in social reform which made the *Wanderjahre*, in its day, one of the books to which socialistic revolutionaries most eagerly appealed. But the main thing to be noted is, that Wilhelm is constantly remoulding his ideal. He does not find it; he loses it, so to speak. It is not so much that he becomes the bourgeois, the philistine (Spiessbürger), as that the word loses its meaning for him.

It often happens to the young man who throws himself eagerly into the study of philosophy in search of enlightenment as to God, eternity, the aim of life, and the immortality of the soul, that, as he studies, these words lose the meaning he at first attributed to them; he obtains an answer to his questions, but an answer which teaches him that these questions must be differently put. The same thing happens in life to Wilhelm, with his longing for a preconceived ideal.

Many have embraced the cloud instead of Juno; Wilhelm lets the cloud go, and presses Juno to his heart.

Wilhelm Meister had almost as much share as *Die Herzensergiessungen eines Klosterbruders* in the production of Tieck's *Sternbald*, which is throughout an echo of Goethe's great work. Immediately after the appearance of *Wilhelm Meister*, Tieck sketched the plot of a very interesting story, *Der junge Tischlermeister* ("The Young Carpenter"), which was not published until forty-one years later. The hero, an almost too accomplished and artistic young carpenter, goes through a process of development which exactly resembles Wilhelm Meister's, as far as the influence of aristocratic acquaintances, of dramatic art, and the theatre is concerned. A true Romanticist, he produces Shakespeare's comedies in a private theatre which is an exact imitation of the theatres of Shakespeare's day, and is the lover both on the stage and behind the scenes.

This work was set aside in favour of *Sternbald*. The modern tradesman had to give way to the artist of the Romantic period of Albert Dürer. *Sternbald* is the apotheosis of "soul," of pure soul, without admixture of reason and lucidity. Hence the sum and substance of the book is desire, pining desire; hence we are told of such an event as the Reformation, that, instead of generating a divine fulness of religion, it only generated the emptiness of reason, in which all hearts languish; hence the mild sensuality of Goethe's romance becomes brutal desire of the William Lovell type. The hero, when he looks within himself, sees, like Lovell, "a fathomless whirlpool, a rushing, deafening enigma." In the second edition Tieck thought it advisable to cut out some of the too numerous wanton bathing and drinking scenes amidst which the restless longing of the hero runs riot.

But the principal thing to which I would draw attention is, that reality is here refined and distilled in a manner unknown to Goethe. It is attenuated into vapour—emotional vapour; personality is drowned in landscape, action in the music of the woodman's horn. In *Sternbald* every day is a Sunday; a devotional feeling pervades the air; we seem to

hear the church bells ring and to know that the world is at leisure. The following words of the hero contain the philosophy of the book: "In this world we can only desire, we can only live in intentions; real action belongs to the hereafter." Consequently there is no action in the story; the characters wander about with as little apparent purpose as comets; their lives consist of a series of accidental, unsought adventures; they are always travelling in search of the ideal, and as the ideal is generally supposed to have taken up its abode somewhere in the neighbourhood of Rome, the book ends there — the *story* is not brought to a conclusion, and is never continued.

It is precisely because of its dreaminess and disconnectedness that Novalis prefers *Sternbald* to *Wilhelm Meister*. "For," says he, "the kernel of my philosophy is the belief that the poetical is the absolutely real, and that the more poetical anything is, the truer it is. Therefore, the task of the poet is not to idealise, but to cast a spell. The poetry of the fairy tale is the true poetry. A fairy tale is a disconnected dream-picture, and its strength lies in its being exactly the reverse of the true world, and yet exactly like it." The world of the future, according to Novalis, is rational chaos—chaos which prevails. The genuine fairy tale must therefore, he maintains, be not a mere tale, but also prophetic representation, ideal, inevitable. The real fairy tale writer is the modern seer. The romance, the novel, is, as it were, free history, the mythology of history. And love, being the form of morality which implies the possibility of magic, is the soul of the novel, the foundation of all romances, all novels. For where true love is, there marvellous, miraculous things happen.

These obscure, yet in a manner unambiguous expressions of Novalis's opinions on the subject of the true nature of poetry and romance, make it easy for us to understand his judgment of *Wilhelm Meister*, a book he had greatly admired in early youth. For in *Wilhelm Meister*, as in *Torquato Tasso*, poetry has to give way to reality, the poetic conception of life to the practical. Novalis could imagine nothing more shameful than this; it was sin against the holy

spirit of poetry. In the novel, in fiction, poetry is not to be done away with, not even to be restricted, but to be exalted and glorified.

So he determines to write a novel which shall be the direct antithesis of *Wilhelm Meister*. He even takes thought of such small matters as type and size, and determines that in them *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* shall be the exact counterpart of the book, the worldly philosophy of which it is to refute by its magic mysticism. He writes to Tieck: "My novel is in full swing; it is to be a deification of poetry. In the first part Heinrich von Ofterdingen ripens into a poet; in the second he is the glorified poet. The story will have many points of resemblance with your *Sternbald*, but will lack its lightness. This want, however, may not be a disadvantage, considering the subject."

Goethe and *Wilhelm Meister* Novalis criticises thus: "Goethe is an altogether practical poet. His works are what English wares are—simple, neat, suitable to their purpose, and durable. . . . He has, like the Englishman, a natural sense of order and economy, and an acquired sense of what is fine and noble. . . . *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* is, in a way, altogether modern and prosaic. Romance perishes in it, and so does the poetry, the magic quality, of nature. The book only deals with everyday human affairs; nature, and the belief in her mysterious powers, are quite forgotten. It is a poetically written story of bourgeois domestic life, in which the marvellous is expressly treated as poetry and fancy. Artistic atheism is the spirit of the book. *Wilhelm Meister* is a *Candide* directed against poetry."

Novalis's aim, then, is to produce a work exactly the opposite of this, one in which everything is finally resolved into poetry, in which "the world becomes soul." For everything is soul. "Nature is to the soul what a solid body is to light. The solid substance stops light, breaks it up into wonderful colours, &c., &c. Human beings are soul prisms."

His novel is, then, an allegory, the key to which is contained in the fairy-tale introduced into the story. This fairy-tale is supposed to show how the true eternal world

comes into existence; it is a description of the restoration of that kingdom of love and poetry in which the great "world-soul expands and blooms everlastingly." Novalis believes that, since the existing heaven and the existing earth are of a prosaic nature, and since our age is an age of utilitarianism, a poetical day of judgment must come, a spell must be broken, before the new life can blossom forth.—King Arcturus and his daughter slumber, frozen in their palace of ice. They are released by Fable (*i.e.* Poetry) and her brother, Eros. Eros is the child of the restless father, Reason, and the faithful mother, the Heart. Fable owes her being to unfaithfulness on the part of Reason; she is born of Fancy, daughter of the Moon; her godmother is the guardian of the domestic altar, Sophia, Heavenly Wisdom.

Against the good powers in this allegory a conspiracy is formed by the Writer. The Writer is the spirit of prose, of narrow enlightenment; he is depicted as constantly writing. When Sophia dips what he has written into a bowl which stands upon the altar, a little of it sometimes remains legible, but often it is all washed out. If drops from the bowl happen to fall upon him, they fall from him again in the shape of numbers and geometric figures, which he eagerly collects, strings upon a thread, and wears round his neck as an ornament. The Writer is Novalis's Nureddin. The result of his plot is the imprisonment of the Father and Mother and the destruction of the altar.

But Fable has escaped. She descends into the realm of Evil, and exterminates Evil by delivering up the Passions to the power of the death-bringing Fates. Time and Mortality are now no more. "The last thread of the flax is spun; the lifeless is reanimated; life reigns." In a universal conflagration, the mother, the Heart, is burned to death, the sun disappears, and the ice is melted round the palace of Arcturus. Through a new, happy earth, stretching far and wide under a new heaven, Eros and Fable pass into the palace. Fable has fulfilled her mission; she has brought Eros to his beloved, the daughter of the king. The kingdom of poetry and love is established.

"Gegründet ist das Reich der Ewigkeit;
In Lieb und Frieden endigt sich der Streit;
Vorüber ging der lange Traum der Schmerzen;
Sophie ist ewig Priesterin der Herzen." [1]

Sophia occupies the same place in this allegory that Beatrice does in Dante's great poem.

The glorification of the old Meistersinger is, of course, intended as a glorification of poetry in general, but his story, as told in the novel, is really the story of Hardenberg's own life and endeavour. Heinrich von Ofterdingen's home and quiet childhood remind us of Hardenberg's. A dream, which seems doubly rich in omen because his father as a youth had dreamed one like it, gives him a fore-feeling of the mysterious happiness of the poet's life, and shows him, in the form of a wonderful blue flower, the object of the poet's longing and endeavour.

In order that he may acquire some knowledge of the world, it is decided that Heinrich and his mother shall travel, in company with a number of merchants, to Augsburg. The incidents of the journey and the tales of his travelling companions enrich him with impressions, and fertilise the germs of poetical productivity that lie latent in his soul. For all their talk is of poetry and poets; they tell him the story of Arion, and popular legends in which poets are the equals of kings, and they philosophise on the subject of poetry and art, not like merchants of the most barbarous period of the Middle Ages, but like Romanticists of the year 1801. One of them, for example, gives the following pantheistic explanation of the instinctive impulse of mankind towards plastic art: "Nature, desiring to have some enjoyment of all the art that there is in her, has metamorphosed herself into human beings. In their minds, through them, she rejoices in her own glory, selects what is most pleasant and lovely, and reproduces it in such a manner that she may possess and enjoy it in manifold ways."

In a castle to which they come, Heinrich meets a

[1] "The everlasting kingdom is firmly established; strife ends in love and peace; the long and painful dream is at an end; Sophia is priestess of all hearts henceforward and for ever."

captive Eastern girl, whose touching plaint it is interesting to compare with the song of the Oriental beauty (La Captive) in Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales*. In a book belonging to a mysterious hermit (the original of the charcoal-burner's book in Ingemann's *Valdemar Sejer*) he finds the history of his own life.

The travellers arrive at Augsburg, and here Heinrich makes the acquaintance of a poet and a fascinating young girl. In Klingsohr he has a noble example of the fully developed poet, a poet whose utterances in many ways remind us of Goethe's. Almost everything that Klingsohr says is surprisingly rational and wise; we can scarcely understand how Novalis himself failed to take any of it to heart. The following are some of his remarks: "I cannot too strongly recommend you to follow your natural inclination to penetrate into the reason of things, to study the laws of causation. Nothing is more indispensable to the poet than insight into the nature of every event, and knowledge of the means whereby to attain every aim. . . . Enthusiasm without understanding is useless and dangerous, and the poet will be able to effect few miracles if he is himself astonished by miracles. . . . The young poet cannot be too calm, too thoughtful. True, melodious eloquence demands a wide, calm, observing mind." Upon one point, however, Klingsohr and Novalis are entirely agreed, namely, that everything is, and must be, poetry. "It is a great misfortune that poetry should have a special name, and that poets should form a separate guild. There is nothing separate or special about poetry. It is the mode of action characteristic of the human mind. Do not all men aspire poetically every moment of their lives?"

All Heinrich's love longings are satisfied when he sees Klingsohr's daughter, Mathilde. He feels once more as he felt when he saw the vision of the "blue flower." But Mathilde is drowned. Heinrich loses her as Novalis had lost Sophie von Kühn. Utterly broken down, he leaves Augsburg. He is comforted in his sorrow by a vision (like the visions Novalis had at Sophie's grave) in which he sees the departed and hears her voice. In a distant monastery, the mission of whose monks it is to keep alive

the sacred fire in young souls, and which seems to be a species of "spirit-colony," he lives "with the departed." He experiences all the sensations to which Novalis has given expression in the *Hymns to Night*. Then he returns from the spirit-world to life, and falls in love with a being no less wonderful than the object of his first passion. Mathilde's place is filled by Cyane.

The second part of the novel is only sketched. Heinrich wanders the whole world round. After going through every earthly experience, "he retires again into his soul, as to his old home." Things material now become transformed into things spiritual. "The world becomes a dream, the dream becomes the world." Heinrich finds Mathilde again, but she is no longer distinguishable from Cyane—just as, in Novalis's own life, Julie was not Julie, but Sophie come to life again. And now "the festival of soul," of love and eternal fidelity, is celebrated. On this occasion allegory reigns supreme. The principle of good and the principle of evil appear in open competition, singing antiphonies; the sciences do the same, even mathematics. We hear much about Indian plants—probably the lotus-flower was made to play a part as partaking of the nature of the "blue flower."

The end of the story is merely indicated. Heinrich finds the "blue flower"—it is Mathilde. "Heinrich plucks the blue flower, and releases Mathilde from the spell which has bound her, but loses her again. Stunned by grief, he turns into a stone. Edda, who, besides being herself, is also the 'blue flower,' the Oriental captive, and Mathilde (fourfold 'Doppelgängerei'), sacrifices herself to the stone. It turns into a singing tree. Cyane hews down the tree, and burns herself along with it, upon which it turns into a golden ram. Edda-Mathilde is compelled to sacrifice the ram, and Heinrich becomes a man once more. During these transformations he has all manner of wonderful conversations." This we can readily believe.

In Danish literature the work most allied to *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is Ingemann's *De Sorte Riddere* ("The Black Knights"). We learn from Ingemann's autobiography how exactly his frame of mind at the time he was writing this

book corresponded to that of the German Romanticist. "I paid but little attention to all the great events that were happening in the outer world. Even the conflagration of Moscow, the destruction of the Great Army, and the fall of Napoleon were to me ephemeral phenomena . . . even in the German War of Liberation I only saw a divided nation in conflict with itself, noble powers without any principle of unity and concord. *Between the ideal life and human life there lay a yawning abyss*, which only the heavenly rainbow of love and poetry could bridge over. . . . I wrote myself into a fairy labyrinth, in which love was my Ariadne-thread, and in which I hoped, with the great harp of the poetry of life, the strings of which are strung by genius from rock to rock over black abysses, *to lull the monsters of existence to sleep*, resolve the dissonances in the great world-harmony, and solve the world-mystery." The result of this attempt was woeful.

It is certain that in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* Novalis succeeded in producing something as unlike *Wilhelm Meister* as possible. The "blue flower" was the emblem of the ideal. Here we have the real forgotten in the ideal, and the ideal in its emblem. Poetry is entirely separated from life. Novalis thinks that this is as it should be. In *Ofterdingen* he says of poets: "Many and important events would only disturb them. A simple life is their lot, and they must make acquaintance with the varied and numberless phenomena of the outer world *only by means of tales and books*. Only seldom during the course of their lives is it permissible for them to be drawn into the wild eddy of some great event, in order that they may acquire a more accurate knowledge of the position and character of men of action. Their receptive minds are quite sufficiently occupied with near and simple phenomena. . . . Here upon earth already in possession of the peace of heaven, untormented by vain desires, only inhaling the fragrance of earthly fruits, not devouring them, they are free guests, whose golden feet tread lightly, and whose presence causes all involuntarily to spread their wings. . . . If we compare the poet with the hero, we shall find that the poet's song

has many a time awakened heroic courage in youthful hearts, but never that heroic deeds have called the spirit of poetry to life in any soul."

The fundamental error could not have been defined more clearly. According to this theory, poetry is not the expression of life and its deeds; no, life and its deeds have poetry as their *origin*. Poetry creates life. Undoubtedly there is poetry of which this may be true; but if there be any one kind of poetry of which it could never be true, it is the kind under consideration. To what possible deed could it incite? To the changing of one's self into a singing tree or a golden ram? There is no question of action in it at all, only of longing.

All the best of Novalis's work is simply an expression of this longing, which includes every desire, from the purely natural ones to the most transcendental aspiration. Perhaps the most beautiful things he has written are two songs—the one giving expression to the sensuous longings of the young girl, the other to the longing which is part and parcel of the enthusiastic friendship of young men.

The song in which the young girls complain of the hardships of their lot is charming. Here the "blue flower" is simply the forbidden fruit. But the longing is expressed with bewitching roguishness. In the poem "To a Friend," again, we have it expressed with fervency and solemnity:—

"Was passt, das muss sich ründen,
Was sich versteht, sich finden,
Was gut ist, sich verbinden,
Was liebt, zusammen sein,
Was hindert, muss entweichen,
Was krumm ist, muss sich gleichen,
Was fern ist, sich erreichen,
Was keimt, das muss gedeihn.

"Gieb treulich mir die Hände,
Sei Bruder mir und wende
Den Blick vor Deinem Ende
Nicht wieder weg von mir.
Ein Tempel, wo wir knieen,
Ein Ort, wohin wir ziehen,
Ein Glück, für das wir glühen,
Ein Himmel mir und Dir!"

The longing here is almost that of the Crusader—a seeking in the far distance for something great and glorious. The "blue flower" melts into the blue of the horizon. Its very colour betokens distance.

Let us dwell for a moment longer on this flower. In Spielhagen's *Problematische Naturen*, one of the characters says: "You remember the blue flower in Novalis's tale? Do you know what it is? It is the flower which no mortal eye has seen, yet the fragrance of which fills the world. Not every creature is delicately enough organised to perceive its perfume; but the nightingale is intoxicated with it when she sings and wails and sobs in the moonlight and the grey dawn; and so were, and so are, all the foolish human beings who, in prose and verse, have poured, and are pouring, forth their woes to Heaven; and so, too, are millions more, to whom no God has granted the power to say what they suffer, and who look up in dumb anguish to the Heaven which has no mercy upon them. And alas! for this suffering there is no cure—none except death. For him who has once inhaled the fragrance of the blue flower there is not a peaceful hour left in life. Like a murderer, or like one who has turned away the Lord from his door, he is driven onward, ever onward, however much his tired limbs ache, and however fervently he longs to lay down his weary head. When he is tormented by thirst, he begs at some hut for a drink; but he hands back the empty vessel without a word of thanks, for it was dirty, or there was an ugly insect in the water—in any case, he had found no refreshment in it. Refreshment! Where are the eyes which have taken from us the desire ever to look into other, brighter, more ardent eyes? Where the breast upon which we have rested with the certain knowledge that we should never long to listen to the beating of a warmer, more loving heart? Where? Can you tell me where?"

"Love," so runs the reply, "is the fragrance of the blue flower, which, as you have said, fills the world; and in every being whom you love with your whole heart you have found the blue flower."

"I fear that is not a solution of the riddle," says the hero

sorrowfully, "for this very condition, that we should love with our whole hearts . . . we can never fulfil. Which of us can love with his whole heart? We are all so weary, so worn out, that we have neither the strength nor the courage essential to true, serious love—that love which does not rest until it has taken possession of every thought of a man's mind, every feeling of his heart, every drop of blood in his veins."

This interpretation is a beautiful one, and it is not incorrect, but it is not exhaustive. It is not only in love, but in every domain of life that the "blue flower" represents perfect, and hence to that extent ideal, but still purely personal happiness. The longing for this, from its nature unattainable, happiness is the constant, restless desire depicted by all the Romanticists.

Perhaps not one of the regular German Romanticists is so completely the poet of Romantic longing as Shack Staffeldt, who, though a German born, wrote in Danish. But he does not depict the longing which produced outward restlessness. His longing is far too deep to be satisfied by wandering about the world. It is in the writings of certain of the later Romanticists that longing appears as the restless desire which drives man from place to place.

Of this it seems to me that we have the most typical description in Eichendorff's novel, *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* ("The Life of a Ne'er-Do-Well"). Published in 1824, this book was written twenty years after *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, though by a man only ten years Novalis's junior, a disciple of Tieck, an ultra-Romanticist of a pious, amiable disposition.

Joseph, Baron von Eichendorff, the son of a nobleman of high position, was born in Upper Silesia in 1788. His family being Catholic, his early education was superintended by a Catholic ecclesiastic. In 1805 he went to the University of Halle to study law, and, amongst other lectures, attended those of Professors Schleiermacher and Steffens, the latter of whom had a special attraction for him. It was here that he made his first acquaintance with Romantic literature; Novalis opened to him a new dream-world, rich in promise. In his very first holidays he went to Wandsbeck to visit old Claudius,

whom he had loved from his early boyhood. Claudius's paper, the *Wandsbecker Bote*, had been his greatest comfort in the days when his tutor plagued him with instructive children's books. There is something of Claudius's mild humour in Eichendorff's own poetry.

The year 1807 found him at Heidelberg, where he made the acquaintance of the Romanticists living there, Arnim, Brentano, and Görres being the most notable. He assisted in editing *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (a famous collection of popular songs and poetry), and collaborated with Görres in his work on the old popular literature. In 1809 he met Arnim and Brentano again in Berlin ; here he also made the acquaintance of Adam Müller, who exercised a considerable influence upon him. He was strongly influenced, too, by Fichte's lectures.

As there seemed no prospect of a career for him in Prussia, he went in 1810 to Vienna, intending to enter the service of the Austrian Government. In Vienna he spent much of his time in the company of Friedrich Schlegel, formed a close friendship with Schlegel's stepson, Philipp Veit, the painter, and wrote his first, exaggeratedly Romantic story, *Ahnung und Gegenwart*, which is nothing but a collection of lyric dreams and fancies. Nevertheless, in this work, as well as in his later productions, it was his desire to contrast the "fervent harmony existing between healthy, fresh humanity and nature, in forest, stream, and mountain, shining mornings and dreamy starlit nights, with the empty pleasures of the great world, and the affected prudery or real depravity of the period." As in all his works, adventure predominates. As soon as he quits the domain of merry vagabond life and romantic adventure, he is in danger of relapsing into the supernatural and horrible.

Instead of entering the Austrian Government service as he had intended, he determined to take part in the war against Napoleon. He joined Lützow's famous Free Corps, and was attached to a militia battalion. He had just been discharged when the news came of Napoleon's return from Elba. He immediately enlisted again, and entered Paris with the German troops.

In course of time he received an appointment in the Prussian Kultusministerium (department of religion and education), and developed into a conscientious and capable official. In 1840, a dispute between the Government and the Roman Catholic bishops produced strained relations between him (the good Catholic) and the head of his department. He sent in his resignation, but it was not immediately accepted; he was commissioned to prepare a report on the restoration of the castle of Marienburg.

Having made himself master of the Spanish language, he translated some of Calderon's *Autos Sacramentales*. This pursuit led to a still closer connection between him and the leaders of the Ultramontane party. In his later years he criticised modern German literature in the spirit of orthodox Catholicism, writing of the Catholic tendency of the Romanticists as if it were the most important and best feature of the school, and treating the change of opinion of some of the leaders in regard to this matter as a falling away from the truth and a sign of literary decadence. He looked with contempt upon Schiller's heroes, with their "rhetorical ideality," and upon the symbolic "Naturpoesie" of Goethe's shorter poems. "How different," he says, "is the great idea of Romanticism, *home-sickness*, longing for the lost home—that is to say, for the universal, the Catholic Church." With these unsound theories Eichendorff combined real and considerable lyrical talent. No one has given, in a condensed form, better representations of the longings and the ideals of Romanticism. In the little story, *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, we seem to hear young Romanticism twittering and singing as if he had caught it bodily and shut it up in a cage. It is all there—the fragrance of the woods and the song of the birds; longing for travel and delight in it, especially when Italy is the goal; Sunday emotions and moonlight; genuine Romantic vagrancy and idleness—such idleness that from want of use the limbs actually begin to fall out of joint, and the hero begins to feel as though he "were tumbling to pieces."

The Ne'er-Do-Well is a miller's son, young and poor, whose only pleasure in life is to lie under the trees and look

up into the sky, or to roam aimlessly about the country with his zither, singing such sad and beautiful songs that the hearts of all who hear him "long." "Every one," he says, "has his allotted place upon this earth, his warm hearth, his cup of coffee, his wife, his glass of wine of an evening, and is content. But I am content nowhere." He, the humble gardener (for such, when he does work, is his occupation), adores a high-born, lovely lady whom he has only seen once or twice; he addresses her in a beautiful and touching song:—

"Wohin ich geh' und schaue
In Feld und Wald und Thal,
Vom Berg hinab in die Aue,
Vielschöne, hohe Fraue,
Grüss ich dich tausendmal.

In meinem Garten find' ich
Viel Blumen, schön und fein,
Viel Kränze wohl draus wind' ich,
Und tausend Gedanken bind' ich
Und Grüsse mit darein.

"Ihr darf ich keinen reichen,
Sie ist zu hoch und schön;
Sie müssen alle verbleichen,
Die Liebe nur ohne Gleichen
Bleibt ewig im Herzen stehn.

"Ich schein' wohl froher Dinge
Und schaffe auf und ab,
Und ob das Herz zerspringe,
Ich grabe fort und singe
Und grab' mir bald mein Grab."[1]

Through his lady's influence he is promoted to the post of rent-collector for the castle. He inherits from his predecessor a magnificent dressing-gown, red with yellow spots,

[1] "From wherever I am, field, forest, valley, meadow, or mountain-top, I send a thousand greetings to my fair and noble lady. In my garden I gather the loveliest flowers that blow; I bind them into wreaths, and bind along with them a thousand thoughts and greetings. I may not give her my flowers; she is too great and beautiful; they wither, every one, but love lives eternally in my heart. In seeming cheerfulness I go about my daily task; my heart is breaking, but I dig and sing, and soon I'll dig my grave."

a pair of green slippers, a nightcap, and some long-stemmed pipes.

Arrayed in his new splendour, and smoking the longest pipe he can find, he lives a quiet, easy life for some time, digging up all the potatoes and vegetables in his garden and planting flowers in their stead, listening with rapture to a distant hunting or post horn, and placing a bouquet every morning upon a stone table where his lady is certain to find it. This goes on until she vanishes from his horizon. As he is sitting alone one day over his account-book, his zither lying beside him, a sunbeam falls through the window upon its dusty strings. "It touched a string in my heart. 'Yes,' said I; 'come away, my faithful zither! Our kingdom is not of this world!'" So he leaves behind his account-book, dressing-gown, slippers, and pipe, and wanders out into the wide world; to Italy first.

This Ne'er-Do-Well is the most comical, awkward, child-like creature one can imagine; in mind he is about ten years old, and he never grows any older. Like Andersen's heroes, the Improvisatore and O.T., he is repeatedly saved from temptation simply by his ignorance and inexperience. He never realises what is going on around him. Things happen to him without his doing anything to bring them about. He is the central figure of a group of characters who all pursue callings which leave them as free as he is himself—painters travelling to Italy, an artist who runs away with his lady-love, musicians wandering from town to town, and roaming students, who trudge along, singing student songs. Compared with this life of wandering and seeking and expectation, ordinary, every-day life naturally appears excessively monotonous. When the hero returns to his native town, he finds the new rent-collector sitting at his door, wearing the same spotted dressing-gown, the same slippers, &c. After having spent his life seeking for his "blue flower," he finds it at last at home. His first rapture is described playfully, almost in Hans Andersen's manner, as follows: "It was such a pleasure to hear her talk so brightly and trustfully to me, that I could have listened to her till morning. I was as happy as I could be. I took a handful of almonds,

which I had brought all the way from Italy, out of my pocket. She took some, and we sat and cracked them, and looked contentedly out over the peaceful scene."

The Ne'er-Do-Well may be regarded as the representative, the spokesman, of the ornamental, profitless arts, and of infinite longing. *Infinite longing!* Let us imprint these words in our memory, for they are the foundation-stone of Romantic poetry.

The longing took curiously morbid forms in the less healthy Romantic souls. The well-known German author, Franz Horn, informs us in his autobiography that at the age of three or four he was already capable of poetic longing and suffering, and of divining life in apparently dead things. He goes on to say that the child-like mysticism of a certain popular refrain had a perfectly magic attraction for him. He quotes the verse in question, and it proves to be none other than the good old rhyme: "Ladybird, Ladybird, fly away home!"

"Maikäfer flieg!
Dein Vater ist im Krieg,
Deine Mutter ist im Pommerland,
Und Pommerland ist abgebrannt,
Maikäfer flieg!"[1]

The other children were hard-hearted enough to laugh at this poem, but to him it seemed most touching. The unhappy cockchafer was fatherless and motherless. His father was in the wars, and "what might not come of that?" And his mother? Of her "the news was still more uncertain." She was in far-off Pomerania, and Pomerania was on fire! What scope for fancy! And there was the poor cockchafer, too, borne on the wings of his longing out into the wide, wide world, seeking, ever seeking.—We positively feel as if we were turning into children again.

But let us return to the idea that underlies all this. The longing of the individual for infinite happiness rests, as has already been said, upon the belief that this infinite happiness is attainable by man. But this belief, in its turn, rests upon

[1] "Fly, cockchafer, fly! Your father is in the wars; your mother is in Pommerland, and Pommerland is on fire. Fly, cockchafer, fly!"

the individual's Romantic conviction of his own infinite importance. The doctrine of immortality itself is only a result of belief in the cosmic importance of the individual. And this belief in the infinite importance of each separate individual is genuinely medieval. Whole sciences, such as astrology, were founded upon it. The very stars of heaven were supposed to have a close connection with the destinies of individual men, and actually to occupy themselves with them. Heaven and earth and all that in them is, revolved round man. The Romanticists naturally feel the want of astrology, and would fain have the science restored. What they call the "blue flower" is what in astrology was called a man's planet, and in alchemy, the philosopher's stone.

In his lectures *Upon the Literature, Art, and Spirit of the Age* (1802), A. W. Schlegel writes: "In the same sense in which we may call Kepler the last astrologist, we may demand that *astronomy should become astrology again.* Astrology fell into disrepute because it made pretensions to science which it could not sustain; but the fact of its having made such pretensions does not take away the idea, the imperishable truths, which lie at its foundation. There is unquestionably something more sublime in the idea of the dynamic influence of the stars, in the supposition that they are animated by reason, and, like subordinate deities, exercise creative power in their appointed spheres, than in the theory that they are dead, mechanically governed masses." And in a letter to Buntzen, Heiberg writes: "It must be allowed that the Middle Ages, with their alchemistic and astrological superstitions, which, albeit superstitions, were based upon a belief in the unity of nature and mind . . . possessed more of the *true scientific spirit than the present day,* with its deliberate renunciation of the one thing which in the long run is of any account." In the same strain (in his essay on Hveen) he praises astrology, as "based upon the profound mysticism of the Middle Ages." When even Heiberg could praise Tycho Brahe for his astrological bias, can we wonder that Grundtvig defended his hypothesis of the earth being the centre of the universe? O Romanticism! Romanticism!

The Romanticists aimed at founding a philosophy and

a literature upon want and longing—that is to say, upon the idea of the infinite importance of the individual. The man who bases his philosophy of life upon want is certainly more reasonable than the man who bases it upon either present happiness or the pleasures and bliss of a future existence; for all the happiness we know is undermined by sorrow and by insufficiency, and thus it is on the whole better and safer to build upon want and desire. But the Romanticists do not build upon desire alone, but also upon its satisfaction; they yearn, they wander about in longing quest of the "blue flower," which beckons to them from afar.

Longing, however, is inactivity, is nourished and thrives upon inactivity. He who has left the Romantic philosophy behind him will not base his life upon such a foundation.

Longing engenders the impotent wish. But the Romantic wish is so instinct with genius, that its fulfilment is permitted —in the Romantic world. What desire promises, life fulfils. Fortune comes to the genuine Romantic hero while he sleeps. Romantic literature consequently leaves the simple-minded reader with the impression of a world where everything comes to those who know how to long and to desire ardently enough, where all hindrances are swept aside without labour, without understanding, without trouble.

It is eternally true that we long; and it is no less true that we must build upon something certain. Amidst all the uncertainty, insecurity, and doubt wherewith we are surrounded, there is one thing certain, one thing which cannot be explained away, and that is suffering. And equally certain is the good of the alleviation of suffering and of release from it. It is certain that it is extremely disagreeable to endure pain, to be fettered, or to be imprisoned; and it is equally certain that it is a great relief to be cured, to have one's fetters loosed, one's prison door flung wide open. *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!* Here is a deed to be done, a stroke to be struck for liberty. We may wander about, full of uncertainty and doubt, not knowing what to believe or what to do; but from the moment we come upon a fellow-being with his fingers jammed in some heavy door that has shut

upon them, there is no longer any doubt what we have to do. We must try to open the door and release the hand.

And, fortunately or unfortunately, it so happens that there are always plenty of human beings whose hands are caught fast, plenty who suffer, plenty who sit in all manner of chains—chains of ignorance, of dependence, of stupidity, of slavery. To free these must be the object of our lives. The Romanticist egotistically pursues his personal happiness, and believes himself to be of infinite importance. The child of the new age will neither scan the heavens in search of his star nor the far horizon in search of the "blue flower." Longing is inactivity. He will act. He will understand what Goethe meant by making Wilhelm Meister end his life as a physician.

If it is impossible to found a satisfactory philosophy of life upon longing, it is equally impossible to found upon it a literature which has any connection with life, and which is capable of satisfying in the long run. The task of literature in all ages is to give a condensed representation of the life of a people and an age. Romanticism contemptuously refused this task. Novalis in Germany and Shack Staffeldt in Denmark present the most typical examples of the manner in which it turned its back on outward reality, to create a poetico-philosophic system out of the mind and the poetical longing of the author. It does not represent human life in all its breadth and depth, but the dreams of a few highly intellectual individuals. The cloud-city of Aristophanes, with its air-castles, is the sacred city and goal of its longing.

XIV

ARNIM AND BRENTANO

HERDER'S *Stimmen der Völker* ("Voices of the Nations"), published in 1767, contained only twenty German "Volkslieder;" but at the time he brought it out, he expressed the wish that he might live to see the publication of a large collection of the old "Nationallieder," as he called them. In 1806 L. A. von Arnim and Clemens Brentano published the first volume of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn;* it contained 210 German popular songs and ballads, and was followed in 1808 by two more volumes of about the same size. This book was not only of the greatest historical interest, but was epoch-making in German lyric poetry and German literature generally. It struck that natural note which for many years gave freshness and sonority to both the Romantic and the ante-Romantic lyric poetry. Even when, in the case of Heine, the entirely modern had supplanted the Romantic theme, rhythm and form and many hardly noticeable turns of expression owed their simple charm to the inspiration of the Volkslied. The superiority of German to French lyric poetry in this century possibly lies chiefly in that absence of everything rhetorical which it owes to the influence of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.

Though the two publishers of this great collection were of one accord in their love for the old popular poetry of their country, and also as to the slightly modernised and carefully expurgated form in which the songs were to appear, and though both were thorough-going Romanticists in principle, they were men of very different characters.

Ludwig Achim von Arnim was born in Berlin in 1781. He studied natural science for some time in Göttingen, and then travelled all over Germany, to make himself acquainted

with the country and the people and to collect popular songs and ballads. After this he settled for a time in Heidelberg, where he met Clemens Brentano and Görres. In company with them, in 1808, he started a literary periodical, the *Einsiedlerzeitung* ("Hermit's Chronicle"), amongst the contributors to which were Tieck, Uhland, Hölderlin, and Jacob Grimm. This periodical he continued at a later time under the title *Trösteinsamkeit* ("Consolation in Solitude").

In 1811 he married Brentano's sister, the famous Bettina, and thenceforward lived partly in Berlin and partly on his estate of Wiepersdorf in Brandenburg. He kept his Romanticism out of his private life; he was a sane, healthy human being, a clever farmer, a sober Protestant and Prussian. Eichendorff describes him as follows: "Handsome and distinguished looking, frank, ardent, and yet gentle, honourable and reliable in all things, faithful to his friends even when every one else deserted them, Arnim was in reality what others, by dint of a sort of mediæval polish, strove to appear—a knightly figure in the best sense of the word; but for this very reason it always seemed to his contemporaries that there was something strange and out of place about him."

Something strange there must certainly have been in his nature, for, staid and sober, calm and harmonious as was his life, his writings give us the impression of restlessness and complexity. He himself was cast in one piece, his works never are.

Besides plays, now unreadable, he wrote two long novels and a number of short tales, which all bear witness to the fantast in him. The epithet "fantast" may be equally suitably applied to Brentano. The first conspicuous difference between the two is, that, whereas Brentano's strength lies in his naïveté and his childlike fancies, Arnim is profoundly serious even in his wildest flights. With all his love for the popular, with all his eagerness to open the eyes of the cultured to the beauty of the simple and childlike, he remained the dignified aristocrat in his own writings; he never let himself go as Brentano did. When his muse has a paroxysm of madness, it is cold,

almost severe insanity, not a fiery, merry frenzy, like that to which Brentano's muse is subject.

His power of plastic representation was great, but quickly exhausted. It shows to advantage in some of his short stories, and in some still shorter fragments of his long novels; but along with descriptions and figures which evince real talent, we are presented with a mass of padding—diffuse digressions from the subject, interpolated tales which have little or no connection with the tale proper, fantastic, impossible episodes, against which even the reader with the most undeveloped sense of realism must protest. Sometimes he lays the whole stock of popular superstitions under contribution, treating them with the utmost seriousness—clay figures are magically endowed with life; a mandrake develops into Field-Marshal Cornelius Nepos. At other times he has recourse to the stock-in-trade of the old-fashioned romances —fabulous parentage, recovery of long-lost children, disguises, strange meetings after the lapse of many years. He is also given to introducing ballads and songs, generally under the rather flimsy pretext that they are the composition of one or other of his characters: fluent, but not melodious, they interrupt the course of the action, momentarily attract the attention of the reader, and are immediately forgotten.

Arnim's principal novel with a modern plot, *Armuth, Reichthum, Schuld und Busse der Gräfin Dolores: Eine wahre Geschichte zur lehrreichen Unterhaltung armer Fräulein aufgeschrieben* ("Poverty, Wealth, Sin, and Penance of Countess Dolores: A True Story, Recorded for the Instruction and Amusement of Poor Young Ladies"), is, taken as a whole, quite as tedious as its title. This novel is another of *Wilhelm Meister's* progeny. It describes the inner life of gifted and distinguished individuals of very varied character, in very varied circumstances. But there is a smooth, pious strain throughout the whole, which is altogether unlike *Wilhelm Meister.*

The story opens with a description of a castle which has fallen almost into ruins because of its owner's poverty. This description is striking and good; it has its counterpart in

French literature in the picture of the Château de la Misère in Th. Gautier's *Capitaine Fracasse*. We are made to feel all the melancholy associated with the idea of former grandeur and present decay. The somewhat frivolous and selfish character of the penniless young Countess Dolores is also drawn with a masterly hand. This lady succeeds in engaging the affections of a distinguished and rich young man, Count Karl, who falls passionately in love with her and marries her, after overcoming various outward and inward difficulties. In the character of Count Karl, Arnim has succeeded in doing what had perhaps never been done in German literature before, namely, depicting what the English call *a perfect gentleman*, a conception for which other nations have no corresponding expression. A *gentleman* is a man of honour, manly, serious, born to command; he is, moreover, a good Christian, conscientious, unselfish, the protector of those around him, not only good by natural disposition, but moral on principle. In this character Arnim seems to have embodied much of what was best in his own nature. Unfortunately he did not succeed in imparting to it sufficient life; a kind of dream-haze surrounds this man of fine feelings, who is always writing verses and who talks a language inspired by the spirit of romance.

The plot turns upon the seduction of the young Countess. She is ensnared by a Spanish duke, who, under a false name and title, gains admission to the house, flatters her vanity in every possible way, and gradually, by the help of magnetism and romantic mysticism, gains complete influence over her, and persuades her that he has some mysterious connection with higher, nay, actually with divine, powers. It seems almost as if Arnim must have had Zacharias Werner in his mind when he drew this character. In Werner's writings we have exactly this same mixture of impudent lust and sanctimonious mystery; and we know that with Werner's mother it became a fixed idea that she was the Virgin Mary and her son the Saviour of the world. We come upon a similar idea in the following somewhat ineffective description of the seduction of Dolores:—

"The Marquis looked up to the sky with an inspired

gaze, held up his hands, and appeared to salute some superior being. He said something, but she could not hear what it was, and anxiously asked what he saw. He answered that he saw the blessed Virgin, that she was pressing her, Dolores, to his breast and placing a crown of roses on her head, saying: 'Follow me!' Dolores, startled, went close up to him, imagining that she felt herself pushed towards him; she felt his breath, imagined it to be the divine breath, and cried: 'I feel her, I feel her breath; it is warm as the sun of the East and as a mother's love.' Upon this, exclaiming: 'And I am her son!' he seized her in his arms, trembling convulsively. He had often talked to her before of a wonderful renewal of the holy myth; she seemed almost unconscious as she stammered the words: 'Yes, it is thou, the all-powerful, the most holy —who hast been given to me in the weakness of our human nature.' 'And thou,' he sobbed, 'art my eternal bride.'"

It would almost seem as though it had been Arnim's intention to describe with the aid of these fictitious characters, the mystic-sensual debaucheries of one of his fellow Romanticists, a Werner or a Brentano. He himself was almost the only one of the school who, in spite of the poetic attraction of Catholicism, remained all his life a staunch Protestant. He seems to be attempting to explain exactly that species of piety which mixed itself up with the licentiousness of his Romantic contemporaries when he gives the following diagnosis of the character of the hypnotising seducer: "We are not justified in altogether doubting the piety of this nobleman, which to his truly pious wife seemed so real. He too possessed the religious instinct; and it was Clelia's natural piety which attracted him to her, though the attraction did not last long. . . . Afterwards superstitious fear took possession of him. He had outlived his vices. It was now not merely his religious instinct which impelled him to visit all the places of pilgrimage in Sicily and all the famous priests; he was deluding himself into the piety which in his wife was genuine. It was a new stimulant, the strength of which he

was obliged constantly to increase. Religion was to him a kind of opium ; his nature craved for more and more of it, till all craving was at an end." (Gräfin Dolores, ii. 136, &c.)

But it is not only the excesses peculiar to the Romanticists which Arnim reprehends ; he also sharply and wittily castigates the anti-Romanticist, Jens Baggesen. In Heidelberg, where he must have met Arnim, Baggesen had written a series of satirical sonnets directed against the Romanticists, "literary sansculottes on the German Parnassus," as he called them. These he published in the same year that *Dolores* appeared, under the title, *Der Karfunkel- oder Klingklingel-Almanach, ein Taschenbuch für vollendete Romantiker und angehende Mystiker auf das Jahr der Gnade* 1810. It was, however, undoubtedly less Baggesen's verses than his extraordinary instability of character which provoked Arnim's satire. The life of this enemy of Romanticism was more planless and capricious than the life of any one of the Romanticists ; and Arnim, for whom everything strange and improbable had an attraction, could not fail to be interested in such a singular personality. In *Dolores* he caricatures him wittily and mercilessly in the person of the poet "Waller." But though, in this instance, the weaknesses of a special individual are caricatured, Arnim's general purpose unmistakably is to throw into salient relief characteristics which exemplify the lawlessness and levity of the emotional life of a whole generation.

His unfinished historical novel, *Die Kronenwächter* ("The Guardians of the Crown"), published in 1817, presents us, like *Dolores*, with several well-conceived and ably elaborated characters along with a mass of undigested mystic and lyric material. In the background of this tale looms a huge, mysterious, enchanted castle, the seven towers of which are absolutely transparent ; they appear to be built of glass, for each of them projects a brilliant rainbow upon black rocks and upon distant water. In this castle the guardians of the crown of the Hohenstaufens have their lonely retreat, and hence they sally forth into the world, to act and to avenge. But it is not this mystical background which is of importance. What one really remem-

bers are one or two characters portrayed with such virile force as probably no German author has exhibited since, unless it be Gottfried Keller, in his historical novels.

We have, for example, the hero's foster-mother, Frau Hildegard, to whom we are thus amusingly introduced at the beginning of the book: — "Martin, the new tower watchman, has to-day married his predecessor's widow, because she has grown too stout to come down the narrow corkscrew stair. We really could not pull the tower down for her sake, so she had to make up her mind to this marriage, though she would have preferred our clerk, Berthold. The priest has had to tie the knot up there." This story of the widow's corpulence is of course nonsense, but none the less it makes a very original beginning to the book.

The action passes in the days of Luther, and Luther's figure is seen in the background. It is rare to find a Romanticist writing of him with such warmth as this: — "As a mountain sends out streams to the east and to the west, so this man combined opposites, things that in others are never found together—humility and pride, conviction of the path he was bound to tread and willing acceptance of the advice of others, clear understanding and blind faith."

A prominent part in the action is taken by Dr. Faust, the Faustus of popular legend, the famous doctor and alchemist. He is represented with a fiery red face, white hair, and bald crown, wearing scarlet trunk hose and ten orders. He is half-genius, half-charlatan, and works miraculous cures.

The most beautifully drawn character is that of a woman, the hero's betrothed, Anna Zähringer, daughter of Apollonia, the love of his youth. She is the tall German maiden of powerful build and noble carriage, but she also possesses the sensuous attraction which Gottfried Keller has a special faculty of imparting to his young women. The hero of the story, Berthold, the burgomaster, is another personification of Arnim's personal ideal. He is of noble descent, but having grown up in humble circumstances, is simple and plain in all his ways,

a good, upright, quiet citizen. Yet all the time he is at heart an aristocrat, who longs for armour and weapons and tournaments, and who actually, without previous training, wins the prize in the first tournament in which he takes part.

Mystic incidents are, of course, not lacking. If Arnim could not forego them in his modern novel, in which we read of a priest who, with one look, imparted to childless wives the power of conception, they were certain to occur much more frequently, and to be of an even more surprising nature, in a tale of times long past. Faust, for instance, cures Berthold by injecting into his veins some of the blood of a stalwart young man, Anton by name, and ever after this, Berthold has the feeling that Anton has somehow acquired a right of possession in his, Berthold's, lady-love, Anna ; and Anton himself immediately feels mysteriously attracted to Anna. *Die Kronenwächter*, like all Arnim's longer productions, is a piece of patchwork, though it must be allowed that the patchwork does not lack poetic value.

It was only in his short tales that he succeeded in producing the effect of unity. *Philander* is a clever and pleasing imitation of the style of Moscherosch, a writer who lived in the days of the Thirty Years' War. In *Fürst Ganzgott und Sänger Halbgott*, we have a humorous variation of the favourite Romantic "Doppelgänger" theme, based upon an extraordinary likeness between two half-brothers who do not know each other ; the story is at the same time a travesty of the stiffness and burdensome conventions of small courts. But Arnim's best and most characteristic work is the short tale, *Der tolle Invalide auf dem Fort Ratonneau*. In it we have all his quaint extravagance, without any breach of the laws of possibility ; and the central idea is touchingly human.

The story, like most of Arnim's, has a whimsically grotesque introduction. The old Commandant of Marseilles, Count Durande, is sitting in the evening by his crackling fire, shoving olive branches into the flames with his wooden leg, and dreaming of the construction of new kinds of fireworks, when he suddenly awakens to the fact

that his leg is on fire. He shouts for help, and a strange woman, who is in the act of entering the room, rushes up to him and attempts to stifle the flames with her apron; the burning wooden leg sets fire to the apron, but the two are saved by people rushing in from the street with buckets of water. The woman's errand is to present a petition on behalf of her husband, whose behaviour has been peculiar ever since he received a wound in the head. He is a most capable, deserving sergeant, only at times so irritable that it is impossible to get on with him. Partly out of compassion, partly because the case interests him, the Commandant gives this sergeant charge of a fort which only requires a garrison of three men, where, therefore, he runs no great danger of falling out with those about him.

Hardly has he entered the fort before he has an attack of furious madness; he turns out his good wife, refuses to admit his two subordinates, declares war against the Commandant, and opens fire upon Marseilles from his high, inaccessible nest upon the cliffs. For three days he keeps the town in a state of terror. Preparations are made for the storming of the fort, in spite of the certain prospect of loss of life and the fear that the madman may blow up the powder magazine. His brave wife, who loves him, mad as he is, begs that she may first be allowed to try to get into the fort, and, if possible, disarm her husband. He fires upon her, but, led by her love, she climbs undismayed up the narrow rocky path at the top of which two loaded cannons face her. And now, as the result of this terrible excitement, the old wound in the madman's head bursts open again; he comes to his senses, totters to meet his wife —he and she and the town are saved.

The effect of this little work is rather weakened by the introduction of supernatural agencies; the whole calamity, namely, is explained to be the result of a stepmother's foolish curse; still, the story in its simplicity is a glorification of that strong, beautiful love which has power to drive out even the devil himself.

And in this, as in several of his other tales, Arnim evinces a humane sympathy with the lower classes which becomes

the aristocratic Romanticist well. It is the same feeling of affection for those who are simple of heart as that which led him to collect and publish the popular songs and ballads, and which finds expression in *Dolores* in the following words of the hero: "I swear to you that often, when I had to pay a couple of thalers for a few lines containing some utterly superfluous formality, I felt a furious desire to take up the inkpot and knock in the lawyer's teeth with it. I should not have been the least surprised to see a flash of lightning come straight from heaven and burn up all his musty documents. And if I feel thus, how much more grievous must such an outlay seem to the poor man who has perhaps to work a whole week from morning till late at night to scrape the money together." We come on this same idea again in his essay *Von Volksliedern*, where he declares that the people have come "to look on the law as they look upon a hurricane, or any other superhuman power, against which they must defend themselves, or from which they must hide, or which leaves them nothing to do but despair."

His aristocratic bias is perceptible in all his Romantic vagaries.

With Arnim's name is always coupled that of Clemens Brentano (1778–1849), his partner in the work of collecting and publishing the German popular songs and ballads. Brentano resembles Arnim in his habit of giving free rein to a vivid imagination, but differs from him in being an unstable, unreliable personality. His talent is more sparkling and supple, he is more of an intellectual prodigy; but it is as a psychological phenomenon that he awakens our interest, not as a man. His only claim upon our sympathy is, that he does not, like his spiritual kinsman, Zacharias Werner, degrade himself by sentimental obscenity. He does not act basely, but he is never truthful in the strictest sense of the word, until, intellectually dulled, he renounces the calling of poet, or even of author, and lives entirely for his religious enthusiasms. His case has a certain resemblance to that of Hölderlin, who became insane at such an early age—the last twenty-five years of his life are lost to literature.

In his young days Brentano is the jester of the Romanticists, the wayward knave and wag who cannot refrain from doing what he knows will cost him the friends he has made, nor from disturbing and destroying the emotions and illusions which he himself has skilfully produced. With the quality, rare among the Romanticists, of grace in art, he combines a certain simple pathos. Like many other men of productive intellect, when he took pen in hand he became more profound, more serious, and, above all, more warm-hearted than he was in real life. Hence he not unfrequently as an artist produces the impression of genuineness, though he was insincere as a man.

As an intellectual personality he had no backbone. Destitute of firm convictions, he could only conceive of two attitudes towards the principle of authority in matters of belief—wild revolt or unqualified submission. His intellect oscillated between these two extremes until it found rest in submission.

Of all his gifts and capacities, he, the arch-Romanticist, had only sought to develop that of imagination. Palpably true is the following confession extracted from one of his letters: "Oh, my child! we had nourished nothing but imagination, and it, in return, had half devoured us." Unbridled imagination, developed without any counterbalancing quality, is distinctly akin to mendacity; and, as a matter of fact, Brentano in his youth was an incorrigible liar, whose favourite amusement it was to move ladies to tears by accounts of his entirely imaginary woes.

He was the *enfant perdu* of the Romantic School. He might also be called the prodigal son of poetry. Like the young man in the New Testament, he was a spendthrift. He squandered all the many good and witty ideas that occurred to him, all the fertile situations which he invented, upon works destitute of definite plan and form, and consequently destitute of the power to withstand time, which so soon sweeps away everything formless. Before he was forty he had exhausted his intellectual capital, had squandered his substance, and was fain, like the young man of the Bible, "to fill his belly with the husks that

the swine did eat"—the husks that were the food of only ignorant and superstitious human beings. In other words, he relapsed into foolish bigotry. In the year 1817 he began to go to confession again, as in the days of his earliest youth, and in the following year withdrew from all intercourse with his fellows, to pass the next six years of his life in devout contemplation by the sick-bed of the nun, Catharina Emmerich, who bore on her body the marks of the wounds of Christ. He regarded the bodily infirmities of this pious, single-minded, but perfectly hysterical girl, as so many wonderful signs of grace, believed in the miraculousness of the supposed imprints of the Saviour's wounds, and with awe-stricken compassion watched them bleed from time to time. Catharina's words convinced him that she possessed a mysterious, supernatural gift of second-sight, and he carefully noted down every one of her visions and hallucinations. He wrote the story of her life, edited her reflections, and wrote to her dictation *The Life of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary*. After her death, which happened in 1824, practically his only occupation was the preparing for publication of the fourteen volumes of manuscript containing her various utterances.

Brentano's life is a remarkable exemplification of the truth of the words of Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*:—

> "Verachte nur Vernunft und Wissenschaft,
> Des Menschen aller höchste Kraft,
> Lass nur in Blend-und Zauberwerken
> Dich von dem Lügengeist bestärken,
> So hab' ich dich schon unbedingt."[1]

Hallucinations and magic played no small part in his existence, and the man who had begun by sneering at rationalism as dull and barren, fell a prey to ideas far duller and more barren than the emptiest rationalism. He was no more a hypocrite than the good soul, Catharina Emmerich, was an impostor. But the craving for some firm, external support for his weak, wavering Ego, now still farther en-

[1] "Yes, despise reason and science, the highest possessions of man, let yourself be persuaded by the spirit of lies to believe in hallucinations and magic, and you are mine without fail."

feebled by remorse for the recklessness of his youth, led him to cling with all the fanatical enthusiasm of his soul to the Church and its miracles, just as he had clung in earlier days to poetry with its fairy-tales and magic.

In his later years he was possessed by a kind of religious mania, though on a rare occasion he showed a trace of his old inclination to waggery. He declared, for instance, that he had drawn the apostles who appeared to Catharina Emmerich in her visions exactly as she had described them to him; but Bettina discovered that he had been unable to resist hanging round the apostle Paul's neck, in lieu of a scrip, a curious old tobacco pouch, which had belonged to himself in former days, and about which many funny stories were in circulation among his acquaintances.

On his father's side Clemens Brentano was of Italian descent. His grandfather, a successful Frankfort merchant, was a native of Tremezzo on the Lake of Como. Through his mother he was descended from the authoress Sophie Laroche, Wieland's friend.

In personal appearance he was the popular ideal poet, handsome, pale, and slight, with a confusion of curly black hair. He had a Southern complexion and sparkling, restless brown eyes shadowed by long lashes. His voice was deep and beautiful, and he was fond of singing his own songs, accompanying himself on the guitar.

He was apprenticed to a merchant, but the experiment proved totally unsuccessful, and in 1797 he went to Jena, where he made the acquaintance of the most famous of the Romanticists, Fr. Schlegel, Steffens, and others. These friends often threatened to thrash him for his mad tricks and "not unfrequently malicious boasts and lies," and the threat was more than once actually carried out. But he could not refrain from offending; it was impossible to him to restrain a caprice. While still quite young, he fell in love with a very gifted woman, Sophie Mereau, wife of one of the Jena professors. In the course of this love affair the couple had many wonderful adventures, some of which we find reproduced in his first book, *Godwi, or the Mother's Statue.* When, in 1802, Fr. Tieck executed a marble bust of Brentano,

Frau Mereau described the impression it produced on her in the following beautiful sonnet, inspired by genuine admiration and love :—

"Welch süsses Bild erschuf der Künstler hier?
Von welchem milden Himmelsstrich erzeuget?
Nennt keine Inschrift seinen Namen mir,
Da diese todte Lippe ewig schweiget?

Nach Hohem loht im Auge die Begier,
Begeistrung auf die Stirne niedersteiget,
Um die, nur von der schönen Locken Zier
Geschmücket, noch kein Lorbeerkranz sich beuget.

Ein Dichter ist es. Seine Lippen prangen
Von Lieb' umwebt, mit wunderselgem Leben,
Die Augen gab ihm sinnend die Romanze!

Und schalkhaft wohnt der Scherz auf seinen Wangen;
Den Namen wird der Ruhm ihm einstens geben,
Das Haupt ihm schmückend mit dem Lorbeerkranze."[1]

Happiness came to Brentano before fame. In 1803 he married Sophie Mereau, who had been divorced from her husband, and they lived most happily together till 1806, when she died in childbirth.

In Heidelberg Brentano collaborated with Arnim in the publication of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and with Görres in *Die Geschichte des Uhrmachers BOGS* ("Story of Bogs, the Watchmaker"). He had already published several works on his own account—*Ponce de Leon, die lustigen Musikanten* ("The Merry Musicians"), *Chronika eines fahrenden Schülers* ("Chronicles of a Roving Student"). In Frankfort he became entangled in a love affair, which led to one of the many tragi-comic episodes in his life. He ran away with a young girl who had fallen violently in love with him, Auguste Busmann, a niece of the famous banker, Bethmann. They went to Cassel,

[1] "What beautiful image is this that the artist has created? Under what genial sky was this man born? Is there no inscription to tell me his name, since these dead lips are dumb for ever? The eye glows with noble desire; enthusiasm shines from that fair brow, surmounted only by clustering curls, not yet by the laurel wreath. He is a poet. The wondrous smile of love, of life, is on his lips; romance dwells in these thoughtful eyes, drollery in the cheeks' roguish curves. Fame will ere long proclaim his name, and set the crown of laurel on his brow."

where he married her. It is said that he tried to escape from her on the way to church, but that the energetic bride held him fast. A few days after the ceremony she threw her wedding-ring out of the window. One of her fancies was to dash through the town on horseback, the long plumes of her hat and the scarlet trappings of her horse floating in the wind. She plagued her husband in many ways. We are told that one of the worst tortures he had to endure was caused by her skill in beating a tattoo with her feet against the footboard of the bed, a performance invariably followed by a skilful *pizzicato* played with her toe-nails upon the sheet.[1] This and other things grew so unendurable that he ran away. The valiant lady procured a divorce the same year, and was ere long married again.

Brentano settled in Berlin, and was soon in great request in social circles there, on account of his powers of conversation, his whimsicality, and his rocket-like sallies of wit. It was in Berlin that he wrote his fairy-tales and most of his *Romanzen vom Rosenkranz* ("Romances of the Rosary"). His play, *The Founding of Prague*, was written in Bohemia, where lay the family estate, Bukowan, of which the younger brother, Christian, took charge. After his return to Berlin in 1816, he wrote the famous tale, *Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und der schönen Nannerl* ("Story of Brave Kasperl and Fair Nannerl"), also *Die mehreren Wehmüller*, and *Die drei Nüsse* ("The Three Nuts"). Then his conversion took place, and he no longer lived for literature. The profits of anything he wrote subsequently were devoted to charitable objects.

Steffens remarks of Brentano that he is the only one of the Romanticists who seems to be thoroughly aware that he has no aim. He calls him an ironical, sportive Kronos, who fantastically demolishes every one of his definite utterances by means of its successor, in this manner devouring his own children. Still, as a lyric poet, a writer of fairy-tales, and a novelist, Brentano has produced works of art, few in number, but of permanent value.

In his poetry there is something touching, simple, and caressingly sweet. He understands the art of condensing

[1] Gödeke: *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, iii., Erste Abth., 31.

an emotion, but he generally dilutes it again, and spoils his effect by repetitions, refrains, or the introduction of inarticulate sounds, such as "Ru, ku, ku, kuh," and the like. Almost all his poems contain single verses of great excellence, but almost all are too long. He has appropriated the diffuseness of the Volkslied. He is distinctly original in such untranslatable verses as the following, taken from the *Dichters Blumenstrauss* ("Poet's Garland"):—

"Ein verstimmend Fühlgewächschen
Ein Verlangen abgewandt,
Ein erstarrend Zitterhexchen,
Zuckeflämmchen, nie verbrannt.

Offnes Räthsel, nie zu lösen,
Steter Wechsel, fest gewöhnt,
Wesen, wie noch keins gewesen,
Leicht verhöhnt und schwer versöhnt.

. . . . . .

Auf dem Kehlchen wiegt das Köpfchen,
Blumenglöckchen auf dem Stiel,
Seelchen, selig Thaueströpfchen,
Das hinein vom Himmel fiel."

The highly artificial style of this poem is very characteristic of Brentano. Both as lyric poet and story-teller he is artificial; but his mannerism seldom gives the impression of affectation, it only witnesses to the almost morbid sensibility of his temperament.

In *Der Spinnerin Lied* we have a simple and touching expression of the pain of the long separation from Sophie Mereau. It begins:—

"Es sang vor langen Jahren
Wohl auch die Nachtigall,
Das war wohl süsser Schall,
Da wir zusammen waren.

Ich sing und kann nicht weinen,
Und spinne so allein
Den Faden klar und rein,
So lang der Mond wird scheinen.

Da wir zusammen waren,
Da sang die Nachtigall,
Nun mahnet mich ihr Schall
Dass du von mir gefahren.

So oft der Mond mag scheinen
Gedenk ich dein allein ;
Mein Herz ist klar und rein,
Gott wolle uns vereinen." [1]

It is right to give Brentano all honour as the creator, in his ballad "Loreley," of a figure which, under the treatment of other poets, notably Heine, has become so living, so truly popular, that one can hardly believe that it is not a genuine legendary figure. It is wrong to do what Griesebach and Scherer have done, namely, turn this praise into a depreciation of Heine's merits, credit him only with the greater literary dexterity, Brentano with the greater capacity of invention. It seems particularly unjust when we remember that Brentano's own finest lyrics are adaptations of popular songs. Read, for example, his beautiful *Es ist ein Schnitter, der heisst Tod.* The poem is to be found under the name *Erntelied* in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn,* and begins thus :—

"Es ist ein Schnitter, der heisst Tod,
Hat Gewalt vom höchsten Gott,
Heut wetzt er das Messer,
Es schneid't schon viel besser,
Bald wird er drein schneiden,
Wir müssen's nur leiden ;
Hüte dich, schön's Blümelein !"

Brentano's lines are more polished :—

"Es ist ein Schnitter, der heisst Tod,
Er mäht das Korn, wenn Gott's gebot,
Schon wetzt er die Sense,
Dass schneidend sie glänze ;
Bald wird er dich schneiden,
Du musst es nur leiden ;
Musst in den Erntekranz hinein ;
Hüte dich, schönes Blümelein !"

[1] "Long years ago the nightingale sang as she sings now. How sweet it sounded ! We were together then. I sit alone and spin and sing, and cannot weep ; clean and strong I spin my thread, as long as the moon shines. The nightingale sang when we were together ; now she but reminds me that you have gone from me. It is of you alone that I think in the moonlight ; my heart is clean and strong as the thread I spin ; may God unite us again."

In their original form the following lines are not only simpler, but more beautiful than in Brentano's version :—

"Viel hundert Tausend ungezählt,
Was nur unter die Sichel fällt,
Ihr Rosen, Ihr Liljen,
Euch wird er austilgen.
Auch die Kaiserkronen
Wird er nicht verschonen.
Hüte dich, schönes Blümelein!"

Brentano's run thus :—

"Viel hunderttausend ohne Zahl,
Ihr sinket durch der Sense Strahl;
Weh' Rosen, weh' Lilien,
Weh' krause Basilien!
Selbst euch Kaiserkronen
Wird er nicht verschonen.
Ihr müsst zum Erntekranz hinein.
Hüte dich, schönes Blümelein!"

He spins out the six verses of the old song to fourteen by the aid of a long list of flowers and plants ; we are out of breath before we get to the end of them. The volume of poems entitled *Die Romanzen vom Rosenkranz* ("Romances of the Rosary") is a romantic variation of the Faust legend, showing the evil of thirst for knowledge and pride of it. Faust himself is transformed into the Mephistophelian evil principle. In this work, as well as in "Loreley," Brentano prepares the way for Heinrich Heine. The romances are written in four-footed trochees, which in their cadence and whole character anticipate Heine's trochaic verse, especially in the droll juxtaposition of light, graceful lines and lines consisting of learned names, obscure legal matter, and scraps of mediæval mystic jargon.

As a prose writer, Brentano began, with his *Godwi*, in the style of *Lucinde*. The first part of the book assumes that true morality consists in allowing the sensual instincts free play, and immorality in repressing or ignoring them. With bacchantic wildness the heroine preaches the gospel of free love, and denounces marriage and every species of

compulsory virtue. The second part, in genuine Romantic fashion, satirises the first part and the characters delineated in it. Godwi, the hero of the first volume, retires into the background, and the author himself, under the pseudonym Maria, takes his place. We learn that it was simply with the view of obtaining the hand of the daughter of one of the personages in the first part of the book, that the author managed to gain possession of the correspondence of which that first part consists. He had hoped by publishing it to attain this end. But, as the first volume is not approved of, he takes it to Godwi, the principal character, and begs him to tell what other love adventures he has had. The astounded Godwi reads his own story. Book in hand, he conducts the author round his garden, and says, pointing to a pond: "This is the pond into which I fall on page 266 of the first volume." Thus in *Godwi* we have Romantic sensual licence in combination with Romantic irony and self-duplication.

The revulsion from revolutionary ardour and passion was even more complete in Brentano's case than in Fr. Schlegel's; it became positive renunciation of reason. And his conversion, like Zacharias Werner's, was of the species accompanied by a tearful conviction of sin. In his *Sketch of the Life of Anna Catharina Emmerich* he tells, without giving a thought to any possible physiological explanation of the fact, that her longing for the Holy Sacrament was so great, that often at night, feeling herself irresistibly drawn to it, she left her cell, and was found in the morning kneeling with outstretched arms outside the locked church door. It never occurred to him that her condition might be a morbid one, not even when she told him all the particulars of the appearance of the stigmata on her body as if the whole thing had happened to another nun of the neighbourhood.

But during the middle period of his literary career, Brentano produced some prose works which are of more than merely historical literary interest; for example, the fairy-tale, *Gockel, Hinkel, und Gackeleia*, which he first wrote in a pithy, condensed form, but at a later period diluted with holy water

and greatly expanded. This tale gives us an idea of the inexhaustible supply of amusing and grotesque conceits to which his conversation doubtless owed its great charm. In it Brentano reveals himself as a master of the prose which, while playing with words and ideas and connecting things which have not the remotest connection, nevertheless dexterously refrains from mixing metaphors, and never breaks the link in the chain of ideas. It may be a perfect trifle, some accidental reminiscence (Brentano's remembering, for instance, that in his childhood he had heard Goethe's mother say: "Dies ist keine Puppe, sondern nur eine schöne Kunstfigur"), which sets him weaving the chain. But with the inexorable artistic severity of a contrapuntist, he holds to his fugitive motive throughout the whole length of his composition, varying and enriching it. As a specimen of this style, take the following paragraph from *Gockel, Hinkel, und Gackeleia*, that tale in which, throughout several hundred pages, words and ideas undergo a transformation which fits them for their place in the hen-world:—

"Die Franzosen haben das Schloss so übel mitgenommen, dass sie es recht abscheulich zurückliessen. Ihr König Hahnri hatte gesagt, jeder Franzose solle Sonntags ein Huhn, und wenn keins zu haben sei, ein Hinkel in den Topf stecken und sich eine Suppe kochen. Darauf hielten sie streng, und sahen sich überall um, wie jeder zu seinem Huhn kommen könne. Als sie nun zu Haus mit den Hühnern fertig waren, machten sie nicht viel Federlesens und hatten bald mit diesem, bald mit jenem Nachbarn ein Hühnchen zu pflücken. Sie sahen die Landkarte wie einen Speisezettel an; wo etwas von Henne, Huhn oder Hahn stand, das strichen sie mit rother Tinte an und giengen mit Küchenmesser und Bratspiess darauf los. So giengen sie über den Hanebach, steckten Gross- und Kleinhüningen in den Topf, und dann kamen bis in das Hanauer Land. Als sie nun Gockelsruh, das herrliche Schloss der Raugrafen von Hanau, im Walde fanden, statuirten sie ein Exempel, schnitten allen Hühnern die Hälse ab, steckten sie in den Topf und den rothen Hahn auf das Dach, das heisst, sie machten ein so gutes Feuerchen unter den Topf, dass die lichte

Lohe zum Dach herausschlug und Gockelsruh darüber verbrannte. Dann giengen sie weiter nach Hünefeld und Hunhaun."

This fairy-tale style, with its perpetual farcical play upon words, almost reminds one of the manner in which the young men in some of Shakespeare's plays give vent to their overflowing humour.

Much graver, if not less mannered, is the style of Brentano's most famous story, *Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und dem schönen Annerl* ("The Story of Brave Kasperl and Fair Annerl").

The subject is taken from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. In the second volume of the collection, p. 204, is to be found a short ballad, *Weltlich Recht* ("Earthly Justice"), which tells the tale of the execution of Fair Nanerl, who is glad to die and go to her child:—

"Der Fähndrich kam geritten und schwenket seine Fahn:
'Halt still mit der schönen Nanerl, ich bringe Pardon.'

"'Fähndrich, lieber Fähndrich, sie ist ja schon todt.
'Gute nacht, meine schöne Nanerl, deine Seel ist bei Gott.'"[1]

In Brentano's version the whole story is told in the street, on a long summer evening, by a poor old woman of eighty-eight, the beautiful Annerl or Nanerl's grandmother. He has been so successful in reproducing this aged, pious, and very superstitious woman's language, that we seem to see her before us all the time. With consummate art, he manages to keep the reader in constant suspense by the erratic manner in which she tells her story, hurrying onward and then turning back to catch up the thread she has let fall. We are never told enough during the course of the narration to give us a clear understanding of the whole position of affairs, but always enough to keep up our interest and make us anxious to know the answer of the riddle, to get at the explanation of the story-teller's mysterious hints. Seldom have the veils

[1] "The ensign came riding, his white flag he waved;
'Stop! here is the pardon—fair Nanerl is saved.'

'O ensign, good ensign, fair Nanerl is dead.'
'Thy soul is with God! Good night, Nanerl!' he said."

concealing a series of incidents from the reader been raised so skilfully, one by one.

Another of the merits of the tale is the vigour with which its main idea, honour (the true and the false sense of honour, the shame of wounded pride and the real shame and infamy to which ambition may lead), is presented to us and developed in the actions and experiences of the two principal characters. Kasperl, the brave Uhlan, whose sense of honour is so keen that it amounts to sentimental weakness, is driven to despair by the dishonourable conduct of his father and stepbrother. He commits suicide, and is thereby saved the anguish of knowing the fate of his sweetheart, fair Annerl. Annerl's whole life has been controlled by a cruel fate. The poet, in his gloomy superstition, has taken real pleasure in driving her onwards to calamity and death with the irresistible, mysterious power of predestination. Annerl's mother in her day had loved a huntsman. This huntsman is to be executed for murder. When the child comes near the executioner, his sword trembles in its scabbard—an unmistakable sign that it thirsts for her blood. The huntsman's head, when it is cut off, flies towards her, and the teeth grip her frock. Of the power that draws her on to wrong-doing and misfortune we are constantly told: "It drew her with its teeth" ("Es hat sie mit den Zähnen dazu gerissen"). Ambition leads to disgrace; Annerl is seduced by a young officer under a false promise of marriage; in her anguish and madness she strangles her new-born child, then gives herself up to justice and pays the penalty of her crime with her young life—her seducer, the ensign, arriving too late with a pardon.

This epitome of the tale shows to what extent Brentano, in this particular case, has done homage to the doctrines of Romanticism. Supernatural warnings play an important part. The career of the heroine is regarded from the standpoint of Oriental fatalism; but at the same time, and without any attempt to smooth away the contradiction, we have the genuinely Catholic persuasion that a sin is being punished, the sin committed by the chief character in setting the purely human principle of honour above the Church's doctrine of heavenly grace. Nevertheless, the little tale has both artistic

style and a genuine popular ring. The spirit of the popular ballad from which its theme is borrowed hovers over it. And, what is still more worthy of note, it is in so far an epoch-making work in German literature, that, long before the appearance of Immermann's *Der Oberhof*, it heralds the age of the peasant-story, striking in its naïve if somewhat artificial style the chord of which we hear the echo so long afterwards in Auerbach and others.

XV

MYSTICISM IN THE ROMANTIC DRAMA

THERE is one form of literature in which men and women are, for the most part, portrayed as essentially intellectual beings, endowed with freedom of will and action. That form is the drama. In lyric poetry emotion reigns ; in epic the character is partly lost sight of in the broad painting of the circumstances and powers which determine it ; but the subject of the drama is action ; and because the human character, acting and willing, is in itself something absolutely definite, it compels the author to give clear, well-defined form to his production. The drama demands lucidity and intellect ; in it, where there is a reason for everything, the forces of nature must be either the servants or the masters of the mind ; but, above all, they must be comprehended ; they cannot appear as dark, mysterious despots, who are not expected to give any explanation of their nature or business. Tieck's two Romantic dramas, the tragedy, *Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva* ("Life and Death of St. Genevieve"), and the ten act comedy, *Kaiser Octavianus*, are really only dramas in name. His admiration of Shakespeare's *Pericles* and *Winter's Tale* and Calderon's lyrical and musical interludes betrayed him into a lyric-epic formlessness unequalled in the history of literature. It would be difficult to find dramatic works more destitute of plan and style. All their author's care is lavished upon what he calls the "climate" of events, their atmosphere and fragrance, tone and colour, the mood they inspire, the shadow they cast, the light in which they are seen, which is invariably that of the moon. His medieval characters are possessed by the spirit which the study of old legends has induced in himself. It was a kind of religious impression which im-

parted this tendency to his productivity. Schleiermacher's *Reden über Religion* ("Lectures on Religion") had had a profound influence on him. He had begun to read Jakob Böhme's *Morgenröthe* ("Dawn"), expecting to find it a perfect mine of absurdities, and from a scoffer had turned into an enthusiastic disciple. It was about this time, too, that he met Novalis and fell under his influence.

Nevertheless, if we read *Genoveva* observantly, we soon find what Tieck himself admits, that its religion, the pious emotion which was intended to give it artistic unity, is no more than the Romantic longing for religion. Many traces of this longing are to be found in the play. The old days, the days of faith, are represented as sighing, like Tieck's own, for still older, far more believing days; their religion, too, is but a longing for religion. Golo says to Sir Wolf, who to him represents the good old times: "How could I dream of jeering at thy childlike spirit!" Genoveva looks back to the past; like Tieck himself, she spends her time reading old legends. She says, with a touch of genuine Romanticism:—

> "Drum ist es nicht so Andacht, die mich treibt,
> Wie inn'ge Liebe zu den alten Zeiten,
> Die Rührung, die mich fesselt, dass wir jetzt
> So wenig jenen grossen Gläub'gen gleichen."[1]

The principal masculine character in the play, the whimpering, whining villain Golo, is William Lovell over again, and William not in the least improved by being dressed up as a dramatic figure in a medieval tragedy.

Octavianus, the allegorical style of which has been strongly influenced by *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, is, if possible, still more shapeless and incoherent than *Genoveva*. It strikes one as resembling nothing so much as a splendid collection of samples of all kinds of metres, those of Southern as well as of Northern Europe, and is in reality simply a fatiguing succession of carefully elaborated descriptions of impressions produced, moods inspired, by nature.

[1] "It is not, then, so much religion that influences me, as strong affection for the olden times, and grief that we of to-day are so unlike those heroes of the faith."

In the introduction to *Phantasus*, Tieck has himself described how all definite impressions of the surrounding world blend in his mind into a sort of mystic pantheism:—

"Was ich für Grott' und Berg gehalten,
Für Wald und Flur und Felsgestalten,
Das war ein einzigs grosses Haupt,
Statt Haar und Bart mit Wald umlaubt.
Still lächelt er, dass seine Kind'
In Spielen glücklich vor ihm sind
Er winkt und ahndungsvolles Brausen
Wogt her in Waldes heil'gem Sausen.
Da fiel ich auf die Kniee nieder
Mir zitterten in Angst die Glieder.
Ich sprach zum Kleinen nur das Wort:
Sag an, was ist das Grosse dort?
Der Kleine sprach: Dich fasst sein Graun,
Weil Du ihn darfst so plötzlich schaun,
Das ist der Vater, unser Alter,
Heisst Pan, von Allem der Erhalter."[1]

And Tieck looked at and apprehended human nature exactly as he looked at and apprehended forest and mountain. In describing it, too, he drowns all definiteness and character in the flood of mystic pantheism. And this mystic pantheism in his plays paves the way for the Christian mysticism distinguishing the Romantic drama.

Arnim and Brentano are hardly to be taken into account as dramatists. The latter, in his mad comedy, *Ponce de Leon*, the dialogue of which is loaded with wearisome play upon words, is the would-be disciple of Shakespeare, who has only succeeded in imitating the affectations of the master's youthful style. In his great Romantic drama, *Die Gründung Prags* ("The Founding of Prague"), he gives us sorcery and miracles, visions and prophecies, magic rings and curses, instead of real human beings and real action; the course of events is indicated by strange forebodings and unerring second-sight.

[1] "What I had taken to be ravine and mountain, wood, meadow, and cliff, was one great head, the forest its hair and beard. The giant smiles to see his children happy at their play. He beckons, and straightway through the forest is heard a rustle of holy awe. I fell upon my knees, trembling with fear. I whispered to the little child: 'What is that great being yonder?' The child replied: 'The fear of him comes upon thee because thou hast been permitted to see him without warning; that is our father, our preserver; his name is Pan.'"

There is some resemblance between the manner in which Brentano has dramatised Slavonic legend in this play, and the Polish Romanticist Slowacki's treatment (in *Lilla Weneda*, for instance) of similar themes. Both, out of crude myths and traditions, have produced pictures of Slavonic heathendom which display a certain gift of intuition. The fact is that the Romantic authors of all lands had a keener sense for religious mysticism than for dramatic truth and effect. This play of Brentano's is actually declared to have influenced the mythological theories of his contemporaries, the brothers Grimm.

Arnim's *Halle und Jerusalem*, the "tragedy in two comedies," as he himself styled it, in which the legend of the Wandering Jew is interwoven with the story of Cardenio and Celinde, is one of the most intolerable productions of German Romanticism. It is a reading-drama of four hundred large octavo pages, which begins as a wild student's comedy in Halle, and develops into a pilgrim-mystery in Jerusalem. It turns upon the medieval idea of the Holy Sepulchre being the centre of the world; and it ends with an apparition of three crosses of fire above the graves of the three principal characters.

In one of the scenes Celinde attempts in the dead of night to cut the heart out of her dead lover's breast, that with its assistance she may perform certain magic rites which will ensure her possession of the heart of her living lover. The dead man, the blood pouring from his breast, rises out of his coffin, and complains of her treatment in such verse as :—

> "Geliebte, du durchbohrst mein Herz,
> Das ist bittrer als der Hölle Schmerz."[1]

Immediately after this, the sexton unmasks himself, reveals himself as the devil, and carries off Celinde's wicked mother to be his bride.

In another scene Celinde is supposed to be about to give birth to a child in a mountain cavern. A stork appears on the stage carrying a child in its beak, and flies into the

[1] "Beloved, thou hast pierced my heart,
Oh, bitterer this than hell's worst smart!"

cavern. Then come a whole flight of storks, which direct their course southwards, singing :—

> "Hast du schwer am Kind getragen,
> Musst sie mit den Flügeln schlagen,
> Hast du müssen lange reisen,
> Musst sie mit dem Schnabel beissen," &c.[1]

The child is born dead, and the wretched mother is in despair. This fact also is communicated to us by a stork :—

> "In meiner Wut,
> In der Reiseglut,
> Hab ich das Kind erdrückt," &c., &c.[2]

Immediately on the head of this follow would-be pathetic, but in reality revoltingly horrible scenes, like the one entitled "The Temptation in the Desert," in which Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, who is starving, struggles against the temptation to eat a little boy, who has been saved along with himself from shipwreck. Ahasuerus says: "How terrible is my desire for his flesh! I already feel the juicy morsel rolling between tongue and palate. . . ." He is on the point of committing the crime, when the child cries: "Father! father!" on which the old man hastily absorbs himself in his book.

Almost at the end of the play, in the middle of a religious service held by the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, an attack is suddenly made upon those Romanticists whose piety is not sincere. A traveller says: "I will deliver the Holy Sepulchre out of the hands of the Turks." One of the author's favourite characters retorts: "Do it first, and then speak of it." Hereupon follows this incredibly undramatic parenthesis: "The traveller turns away ashamed; he goes out into the wide world and pleads the cause of Christianity in thousands of words; but his words have not the

[1] "The child, a heavy weight, you have borne;
Flap your wings at the mother, all forlorn;
A weary way you have had to bear it,
Catch hold of her cheek with your bill, and tear it," &c., &c.

[2] "In my irritation,
In the journey's agitation,
I crushed the child," &c., &c.

power of eternal life, for his is love without deeds. From him are descended all the new, poetic Christians, those, *I* mean, who are only Christians in their poems." When it comes the length of the author's "I" appearing in a parenthesis in the middle of a play, we may regard dramatic form as practically non-existent. Even Tieck and Hoffmann never went as far as this.

German Romanticism produced only two real dramatists —Zacharias Werner and Heinrich von Kleist. Of these, the latter is incomparably the greater; indeed his poetic gifts are so great that one may unhesitatingly assign him the highest place among all the poets of his school. He has a clearer, more plastic style than any of them, and pathos such as we do not find even in Goethe. His finest works are full of soul, heart, and burning passion, and yet the style is simple and lucid. Kleist is Germany's Mérimée; and a study of his characteristics will show us what the German Romantic tendency could make of a Mérimée. We shall see how the clearness, the definiteness, which was the natural quality of his genius, was disturbed and deranged by the poetical insanity of Romanticism.

Thirty steps from the Wannsee, a little lake near Berlin, and fifty from the wayside inn, stands a gravestone bearing the inscription: "Heinrich von Kleist."

Upon this spot, on the 20th of November, 1811, at the age of thirty-four, the greatest German poet of the younger generation of that day, shot, with unerring aim, first the woman he loved and then himself. It was long believed that the two were united simply by a calm, reasonable friendship. But when, in 1873, their correspondence was published, its unhealthy passion made it evident that there was extravagantly strong feeling on both sides, and that the reason of both was undermined. Kleist addresses his friend, Frau Henriette Vogel, in such terms as these: "My Jette, my all, my castle, land, meadows, and vineyards, sun of my life, my wedding, baptism of my children, my tragedy, my fame, my guardian angel, my cherub and seraph!" and she replies: "My defence, my guard, my sword, my spear, my buckler, my shield," &c.

Heinrich von Kleist was of noble birth, the scion of an old Prussian military family, which in the eighteenth century had already produced a poet. Heinrich had been through one campaign, as a young ensign, when military life became distasteful to him, and a dim consciousness of his unusual powers impelled him to turn to study. In 1799 he matriculated at the university of his native town, Frankfort-on-the Oder, and was soon working hard at philosophy, mathematics, and classics, living, in spite of his youth, a very sober life, entirely occupied with his own ardent introspective thoughts. In an awkward, pedantic way he attempted to educate his sister, and to cultivate the mind of his *fiancée*, so that she might really understand him. In the course of a year he left Frankfort to pursue his studies in Berlin. He early developed a fatal inclination to stake everything on one card. His biographer, Wilbrandt, has aptly compared his character to Werther's. He had Werther's gloomy dissatisfaction and cynical reserve, his vivid imagination, his habit of brooding and reasoning, and of dwelling upon everything painful, his overpowering outbursts of emotion.

It was clear to Kleist himself that his was the poet's vocation long before he dared confide the thought to his friends; he left them, he isolated himself, until he was certain of his powers. When for the first time he felt the plan of a work taking shape in his mind, it seemed to him as though "something like earthly happiness" were smilingly beckoning him on. Impetuous and audacious, he expected to produce a masterpiece at once. The immature beginner's attempt was unsuccessful. When, a year later, he planned *Robert Guiscard*, the tragedy which occupied his thoughts throughout the rest of his youth, it was with the distinct intention of surpassing the classical works of Goethe and Schiller "by the aid of a new art principle." In his art Æschylus and Shakespeare, the best qualities of antiquity and the Renaissance, were to be fused together, the cult of the beautiful was to be combined with truth to nature, and irreproachable style with the extreme of tragic horror.

His powers were as yet inadequate to the task of pro-

ducing a complete work, and he was obliged to lay the tragedy aside.

In the discouragement produced by the failure of this attempt he turned to philosophy. His desire was to find, not truths, but the truth. With the naïve confidence of the self-taught man he expected to discover at once the full, perfect truth which would guide him both in life and death.

It was the philosophy of Kant which he set himself to study, and the impression it made upon him was distinctly depressing. He had expected to find a religion in philosophy, and Kant's Theory of Cognition taught him that we cannot attain to the truth, can never know what things are in themselves, but only see them as our own organs show them to us—that is to say, he who has green spectacles sees things green, and he who has red, sees them red. When he recognised that knowledge of the truth, as he had represented it to himself, was not possible, it seemed to the young man as if his highest, his only aim were gone.

In this state of spiritual disorganisation he, like other Romanticists, felt the inclination to seek the support of a system of dogmas, either that of orthodox Protestantism or that of the older and more authoritative Catholic Church. He writes from Dresden: "Nothing could have been better calculated to entice me away from the melancholy domain of science than the treasures of art collected in this town. . . . But nowhere did I feel so deeply moved as in the Catholic church, where the most sublime music leagues itself with the other arts to touch the heart. Our divine service is nothing at all in comparison; it only appeals to cold reason, but a Catholic festival appeals to all the senses. . . . Oh, for one drop of forgetfulness! then I should with joy become a Catholic."

Though he overcomes these fancies, he is unable to force himself to work, now that he has made the discovery that truth is not to be found upon earth. To put an end to this painful aimlessness, he determines, though with no particular object in view, to go to Paris. His letters from Paris show how fruitless this new attempt at discovering his real vocation in life proved. He breaks off his engagement,

because his *fiancée* will not blindly and obediently follow him to Switzerland, there to live the life of a peasant's wife. His pride will not permit him to return to his native town before he has accomplished something in the way of fulfilment of his ambitious projects. He goes to Weimar with the intention of completing *Robert Guiscard* there, is much in Wieland's society, and finally takes up his abode in his house. The old man's goodness and his daughter's quiet tenderness keep him there, but he remains reserved and absent-minded. At last he confesses to the lovable, sympathetic old poet that he is at work upon a tragedy, but that his ideal is so high that he has as yet found it impossible to transfer his conception to paper.

One afternoon Wieland, taking advantage of a favourable opportunity, persuaded his guest to repeat some fragments of the principal scenes from memory. The old poet's admiration knew no bounds; he asserted that if it were possible for the spirits of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Shakespeare to combine in creating a tragedy, it would be such a tragedy as *Robert Guiscard*, provided that the whole fulfilled the promise of the parts he had heard.

Kleist's joy was great, but short-lived. Circumstances soon unsettled him again. He went first to Leipzig, then to Dresden. It was in Dresden, to a girl who was in distress because of the supposed indifference of her lover, that he first made the proposal (a proposal which he afterwards often repeated to friends of both sexes), that he should take a pistol and shoot her and himself. Not long afterwards he made a similar offer to his faithful friend, Von Pfuel. Pfuel came to the conclusion that travel would be the best thing possible for Kleist and his tragedy. Kleist caught eagerly at the idea. Shortly before he started for Switzerland he received a letter from Wieland which gave him fresh courage, and was for a long time his greatest comfort. Wieland wrote that it was impossible to him to believe that any external hindrance could prevent the completion of Kleist's masterpiece: "To the Holy Muse who inspires you nothing is impossible. You must complete your *Guiscard;* yes, even if the whole Caucasus were weighing you down."

During his travels in Switzerland and Northern Italy, which occupied the summer and autumn of 1803, Kleist wrote nothing. Despairing of the sufficiency of his powers, coming to the conclusion that he possessed only a "half talent," he temporarily gave up all idea of literary work. All the time tormented by thoughts of death, he travelled by Lyons to Paris. There he burned *Guiscard* and all his papers, and determined to enter the army of France (a nation he hated) and take part in the great expedition preparing at Boulogne, in the confident hope that the undertaking would fail, and that he and the whole army would find graves in England. He tried to enlist as a common soldier, but was refused. An acquaintance whom he accidentally met, put him in a position to return to Germany, where, after many mishaps and disappointments, he obtained a small official appointment at Königsberg.

Kleist had announced his intention of competing with Goethe. "I will tear the wreath from his brow," was early the burden of his confidences and his dreams. It sounds like the utterance of a madman. And yet, when we read the one fragment that remains to us of the never-completed drama, *Guiscard*, we are filled with astonishment. It was as little within the power of this work as of any other to remove the crown of honour from the brow of the genius whose spirit dominates two centuries ; but the fact remains that the fragment of it which we possess stands on a level with much of the best produced by Goethe.

Kleist has drawn on his imagination for the picture of a great man, a great leader ; and he at once successfully impresses us with his hero's greatness by showing how much depends upon him, upon his life, how thousands upon thousands look up to him as their ruler and only saviour.

The great adventurer, Robert Guiscard, son of Tancred de Hauteville, is lying with his army before Constantinople, which city he has vowed to take and keep. But fate is against him ; the plague has broken out in his camp and is committing terrible ravages.

Kleist himself had encountered just such overwhelming misfortune on the path of victory which his imagination had

painted ; and his delineation of a hero struggling against an overpowering destiny which he has long borne consciously within himself is grand. For Guiscard himself is plague-stricken ; the mortal sickness is raging in his intestines ; its poison is consuming his very bones. He who till now has been everywhere victorious, the conqueror of Southern Italy, of Rome, of Venice, and of Greece, knows, feels, that his end is at hand. A crowd of Normans are besieging his tent, calling on him to lead the army away from this terrible camping-ground, where they feel the poisonous breath of the plague blowing in their faces. A rumour that he is ill has already begun to spread, but as yet the truth is not to be divulged ; Guiscard is too proud to let any one know what he is suffering.

His tent is thrown open, and the man in whose breast a consuming fire is burning, whose throat is parched with unquenchable thirst, and whose hand is so weak that all through the night he has not been able to lift it, steps forth erect and proud, and shows himself to the crowd. So strong and gay and masterful does he seem, that even those who before were certain of the worst, no longer know what to believe.

And there is profound meaning as well as grandeur in this conception of Kleist's. This Guiscard, who stands there erect and unflinching while mortal disease is gnawing at his vitals, who is he but Kleist himself, his whole unhappy life long ? He himself is the great genius whose plans are foiled by the pestilence without and within him.

Kleist soon resigned his Government appointment and returned to the calling of literature. It is most interesting to observe the dramatic characters now produced by a man in reality full of productive energy. Our study of the psychological peculiarities and doctrines of the Romanticists has shown us how their predilection for disintegrating personality led them to lay special weight upon all that has a disintegrating effect—dreams, hallucinations, and madness. What distinguishes Kleist's characters from those of the other Romanticists is that there is nothing blurred and vague about them ; the essential quality which his and theirs have in com-

mon is morbidity. In every passion Kleist seizes upon that feature which betrays kinship with the fixed idea or with helpless insanity ; he probes every mind, however sound, till he finds the diseased point where it loses control over itself —somnambulistic tendency, overpowering animal appetites, absent-mindedness, cowardice in the face of death. Take such a passion as love ; it is certainly not of a rational nature, but it has a side from which it may be seen to be connected with reason and intellect. Kleist almost invariably, and with admirable skill, depicts it as of the nature of disease, as mania.

When Käthchen of Heilbronn sees Count Walter von Strahl for the first time, she drops everything she is carrying, food, wine, and glasses, and, pale as death, with folded hands, falls at his feet as if she had been struck by lightning. The Count speaks a friendly word to her. Presently, from her window, she sees him mounting his horse to ride away. In her haste to follow him, she jumps from the window, thirty feet high, on to the street, and breaks both her legs. Barely recovered from six weeks' fever, she rises from her bed, collects a small bundle of belongings, and deserts her home to seek the Count and follow him in blind devotion from place to place, led "by the rays which shine from his face and twine themselves round her heart like a five-stranded cord." She wanders after him, her bare feet bleeding on the stony roads, her scanty skirt fluttering in the wind, a straw hat her only protection against the heat of the sun and the pelting of the rain. Through mountain mists, across desert tracts scorched by the sun, through the darkness of thick forests, she follows, like a dog on its master's track ; and she, who had been accustomed to lay her head on soft pillows, disturbed by each little knot spun inadvertently by herself into the thread of the sheets, now, when night comes, sleeps in the Count's stables like the meanest servant, sinking exhausted upon the straw spread for his horses.

There is the ring of truth in this description, given by her father, of the young girl's flight. The Count, who knows that he is in no way to blame, tries every

method of alienating her. Coming upon her in his stable one night, he thrusts her aside with his foot, and more than once he threatens her with his dog-whip. He allows her to sacrifice herself for his bride, who orders her to rush into a burning house to save his miniature, and when she has brought it, sends her back again for the case. With joy and deep humility she does and bears all. The more refined, but weaker, representation of an overpowering, unrequited passion given us by Henrik Hertz in *The House of Svend Dyring* is modelled upon Kleist's Käthchen. Side by side with much that is ridiculous and repulsive, *Käthchen von Heilbronn* contains much that is really grand. It is plain enough that this passion, which comes on as suddenly as a fit of apoplexy—which, moreover, as a fixed idea, destroys every other idea, and, itself a miracle, performs miracles with the aid of an angel—oversteps the bounds of the natural and the healthy. Yet there is something fine in it. It gave intense satisfaction to Kleist, who had such a rooted aversion for mere phrases, to represent a loving woman, in whom everything was truth and reality which in other women is mere words. It was thus that he himself had desired to be loved by his Wilhelmine ; and at a later period he had demanded such excessive devotion from a young girl whose acquaintance he had made at the Körners' house in Dresden, and who had become attached to him, that all relations between them were broken off. Now he had taken refuge with his ideal in poetry.

There is something satisfying and pleasing in the realisation of the well-known phrases: To see and love was one and the same thing—to follow the beloved to the ends of the earth—to be more devoted to him than his dog —to go through fire and water for him. But yet all this properly belongs to the domain of pathology; these are morbid manifestations. Then, too, we have the Romantic reason of it all. Käthchen's violent agitation when she sees the Count is explained by the fact of his having previously appeared to her in a dream. At the moment when she sees him in this dream, the Count is in reality lying dangerously ill with typhus fever. Stretched like a

corpse on his bed, he himself has the feeling that he is entering Käthchen's room. And when he hears of the strange coincidence, he cannot help exclaiming anxiously—

> "Help me, ye gods! Now am I double!
> A spirit I, who wander in the night."

Here we have the favourite idea of Romanticism, "Doppelgängerei," in close connection with somnambulism.

Somnambulism plays a similar part in *Der Prinz von Homburg*, the finest of Kleist's dramas—probably the finest drama produced by the Romantic School. In it all the important characters stand out as if hewn in stone. The dialogue is vigorous and clear; every word tells. The young cavalry leader commits an unpardonable breach of discipline; he is victorious in an engagement which he has brought about in a manner forbidden in his instructions. The Elector condemns him to death. Not for a moment imagining that the sentence will be carried out, the young hero treats it as a mere matter of form. When it dawns upon him that it is sober earnest, a sudden fear of death takes possession of him, and he abjectly begs for his life. Kleist's genius shows itself in the delineation of the mental process by which the Prince becomes himself again, and demands death as his right. Here once more it is the night side of the mind to which attention is drawn. The Prince is nervous, ill, and absent-minded. In the first act he walks in his sleep. In the last we have the realisation of one of his visions. He transgresses orders, not, like the son of Manlius Torquatus, in youthful audacity and martial ardour, but because, in his nervous, dreamy absent-mindedness he has not heard the orders given, and consequently dashes recklessly on.

Kleist had been deeply interested by G. H. von Schubert's *Die Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* ("The Night Side of the Science of Nature"). This book, written by the most popular "Naturphilosoph" of the day, is one of the most extravagant works of the whole period. The night side of a planet is that which is turned away from the sun, and only glimmers faintly in the darkness, with a light destitute of

warmth, a light in which all objects look strange, and totally different from what they do in the light of the sun. Schubert considers that he succeeds, in his "Science of Nature," in demonstrating the existence of such a night side. The first half of the work is "Naturphilosophie," much as Steffens understood it. "This is certainly not philosophy for the world," says the author, "but it is much older than the world and all its philosophies, and will last much longer." Most of it is on the same lines as the so-called occult sciences of to-day. Man, like the nature which surrounds him, is a "prophetic hieroglyph." In animal magnetism, in somnambulism, in presentiment, and in so-called prescience, proofs are sought of a predestined harmony between the life of the individual and that of the whole.

According to Schubert's theory, man originally had the power of working miracles. Sin bereft him of his power over nature, and after this there was always something dark and dæmonic connected with the miracle-working gift — with the oracles of Greece, for instance, and with all heathen sorcery. The old, natural miraculous power was revived in Christ. In its dæmonic form it has reappeared among the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons (the secret societies which played so important a part in the imagination of Schubert's day); and it is also observable in such phenomena as animal magnetism, clairvoyance, &c. Adam Müller writes: "Schubert's book seems to me the best which the 'Naturphilosophie' has produced; its author, though not superior to Schelling in polemical and critical talent, is certainly his superior in feeling, in sincerity, and above all in erudition. . . . In Schubert's writings I find a glorified, yet in all essentials accurate presentment of an earlier stage of my development, when my one longing was, that all that was human and personal in my power of achievement might, as it were, dissolve into the smoke of a sweet incense, an offering to the God I worshipped. How I longed to be able to divest myself of name and personality, and become the most devoted of martyrs or the most priestly of priests" (der geistlichste Geistliche).

Every one read the book, and even a mind like Kleist's allowed itself, as we have seen, to be engrossed by all this pretentious foolishness. Mysticism was the order of the day, and it is curious to see how the mystic element, the strange trinity of sensuality, religion, and cruelty, insinuates itself into all Kleist's dramas. Take, for example, that remarkable tragedy, *Penthesilea*. The heroine is the wild queen of the Amazons, who is waging a victorious war upon both the Greeks and the Trojans. It is a law among the Amazons that each must capture in battle the man who is to be her husband ; then, when the war is over, she lives with him in peace and happiness. Penthesilea has conceived quite as fatal a passion for Achilles as Käthchen's for Count Strahl. But in Penthesilea love shows itself in a different way ; it takes the form of cruelty. In every battle she pursues Achilles, thirsting for his blood. If Käthchen loved like a dog, Penthesilea loves like a tigress escaped from a Bacchanalian procession.

It is plain that it is his own temperament with which Kleist has endowed the Amazon queen. She cares for nothing, will take nothing, but Achilles, just as he refused to aim at anything, to be content with anything, but the highest place of honour. Her wild haste to conquer her beloved corresponds with his desire to attain his aim at one blow, with his drama, *Robert Guiscard*. Like Kleist, she can only live when she is striving after what her soul desires. She says, what her author might have said: 'I should go mad if I did not attempt all that is within the bounds of possibility."

She hates Achilles as fervently as Kleist in dark hours must have hated and cursed the destiny which forbade his winning the highest fame. She kills him in an access of detestation, as Kleist, in an access of desperation, destroyed his beloved work, his *Guiscard*. Yet she loves him, loves him helplessly, with a consuming passion.[1] When Achilles has wounded her in battle, she complains in words which seem to refer to the poet himself :—

[1] *Cf.* Otto Brahm, *Heinrich von Kleist.*

"Mir diesen Busen zu zerschmettern, Prothoe!
Die Brust, so voll Gesang, Asteria!
Ein Lied, jedweder Saitengriff auf ihn!"[1]

When she is on the point of giving up everything, she says, as Kleist did in so many of his letters to his sister:—

"Das Aeusserste, das Menschenkräfte leisten
Hab ich gethan, Unmögliches versucht,
Mein Alles hab ich an den Wurf gesetzt;
Der Würfel, der entscheidet, liegt, er liegt:
Begreifen muss ich's—und dass ich verlor!"[2]

We can readily understand how it was that Pfuel, Kleist's faithful friend, found him sitting weeping after writing the description of Penthesilea's death. Indeed, the poet himself wrote of the play to a friend: "It is true; you have divined it with the glance of a seer; my inmost self is in it, my soul in its glory and its anguish."

Yet this personal element does not preclude Romantic mysticism; the story is impregnated with it. Penthesilea's love expresses itself in such words as the following:—

"Hetzt alle Hund' auf ihn! mit Feuerbranden
Die Elephanten peitschet auf ihn los!
Mit Sichelwagen schmettert auf ihn ein
Und mähet seine üpp'gen Glieder ab!"[3]

This last repulsive wish, to see Achilles' limbs mowed off by the scythes of the chariots, is, as we learn at the conclusion of the play, no feigned desire. The Amazons are defeated, and their wearied and wounded queen falls into Achilles' hands. He loves her, and, to keep her from grieving and despairing, he attempts to make her believe that she has been victorious, and that he is her captive. She soon, however, discovers the truth. Then Achilles

[1] This speech is taken from the early edition. "To think that he could crush this breast, Prothoe! a breast so full of song, Asteria! At every touch upon its strings it gave forth melody."

[2] "The utmost that human powers can do, I have done; setting my all upon one throw of the dice, I have attempted the impossible. There the dice lie—and I have lost, have lost; 'tis this that I must force myself to understand."

[3] "Set all the dogs upon him! Drive on the elephants with firebrands, that they may crush him under foot! Press on the chariots, that their scythes may mow his lusty limbs!"

challenges her to single combat, with the intention of allowing her to defeat him, and in this manner becoming her husband. When Penthesilea receives the challenge, she does not understand its meaning. She is seized by a sort of Berserker fury, throws herself upon her horse, cries to her hounds, and dashes off. He sees her coming and is afraid. She bends her bow "till the ends kiss," takes aim, and sends an arrow through his neck. He falls, but, with the death rattle in his throat, struggles to rise again; then she urges on her hounds to tear him to pieces, and, following their example, sets her teeth in his breast and bites until the blood drips from her mouth and hands.

"Doch hetz! schon ruft sie: Tigris! hetz, Leäne!
Hetz, Sphinx! Melampus! Dirke! hetz, Hyrkaon!
Und stürzt—stürzt mit der ganzen Meut, o Diana!
Sich über ihn, und reisst—reisst ihn beim Helmbusch
Gleich einer Hündin, Hunden beigesellt,
Der greift die Brust ihm, dieser greift den Nacken,
Dass von dem Fall der Boden bebt, ihn nieder!
Er, in dem Purpur seines Bluts sich wälzend,
Rührt ihre sanfte Wange an, und ruft:
Penthesilea! meine Braut! was thust du?
Ist dies das Rosenfest, das du versprachst?
Doch sie—die Löwin hätte ihn gehört,
Die hungrige, die wild nach Raub umher
Auf öden Schneegefilden heulend treibt—
Sie schlägt, die Rüstung ihm vom Leibe reissend,
Den Zahn schlägt sie in seine weisse Brust,
Sie und die Hunde, die wetteifernden,
Oxus und Sphinx den Zahn in seine rechte,
In seine linke sie; als ich erschien,
Troff Blut von Mund und Händen ihr herab."[1]

[1] "At him, good dogs!" she cries, "at him, good Tigris, Leäne, Sphinx, Melampus, Dirke, and Hyrkaon!" and, shouting thus, she rushes madly at him with the pack, and, like a dog among the dogs, catches him by the plume of his helmet and pulls him down, the earth shuddering at his fall. One has him by the neck, one by the breast. Weltering in his blood, he touches her soft cheek and cries: 'Penthesilea! sweet love! art thou beside thyself? Is this the bridal festival thou promisedst?' The lioness, the hungry lioness roaring for her prey on the barren plain, would have listened to him—but she—she tears the breastplate from his breast, and sets her teeth deep in his flesh—she and her hounds in rivalry; Oxus and Sphinx have him by the right breast, she by the left. When I arrived, the blood was streaming from her mouth and hands."

It is long before she comes to her senses and realises what she has done. Her first feeling is utter despair, but presently she says :—

"Wie manche, die am Hals des Freundes hängt,
Sagt wohl das Wort : sie lieb'ihn, o so sehr,
Dass sie vor Liebe gleich ihn fressen könnte ;
Und hinterher, das Wort geprüft, die Närrin !
Gesättigt sein zum Ekel ist sie schon.
Nun, du Geliebter, so verfuhr ich nicht ;
Sieh her : als ich an deinem Halse hing,
Hab ich's wahrhaftig Wort für Wort gethan ;
Ich war nicht so verrückt, als es wohl schien." [1]

She is not so mad as she seems. It is the same here as in *Käthchen von Heilbronn*—what with most women is only a figure of speech, is in Penthesilea's case reality. Many a woman says she loves her lover with a passion so wild that she could eat him ; Penthesilea does it. She says :—

" Küsse, Bisse,
Das reimt sich, und wer recht von Herzen liebt,
Kann schon das eine für das andere greifen." [2]

But even this is not the complete explanation. As yet we have only the two elements, sensuality and cruelty ; the third, religion, is present also. It appears as the supplementary colour when we look carefully at the first two. Remember Novalis's words, already quoted : "The divine significance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is an enigma to the carnal mind. But he who even once has drunk in the breath of life from warm, beloved lips, whose heart has melted in the quivering flames of holy fire . . . he will eat of His body and drink of His blood for ever more." The great Christian mystery was a subject occupying all minds at this time, Kleist's among the rest. One of his intimate friends was the most notable mystic of the

[1] "Many is the woman who, with her arms round her lover's neck, has said : 'I love thee so, that I could eat thee.' If the fool tried, she was disgusted. It was not so with me, beloved. When I hung upon thy neck I said it not; I did it. I was not so mad as I seemed to thee to be."

[2] " Kisses and bites—the two words rhyme (in German) ; and when one loves with all one's heart, it often happens that one confuses them."

day, the ingenious sophist, Adam Müller. It may astonish us, or offend us, to find traces of Christian mystic dogma in a pagan drama which has the Queen of the Amazons for heroine ; but to understand this, and many other kindred phenomena, we must take the relative truth and justifiableness of this mysticism into consideration. These men could not shut their religious ideas into a cupboard, and keep them altogether apart from their lives and actions. It was not only twice, or possibly three times, a year that such a subject as the Lord's Supper occupied their minds ; it pervaded all their thoughts ; they strove to see life in the light of this great mystery. In the complete edition of Friedrich von Baader's collected works (vol. iv. Anthropology), amongst a number of short essays, such as: *On the Ecstatic Rapture of those who Talk in Magnetic Sleep, The Vision Seer of Prevorst, Forty Tenets of Religious Love, &c., &c.*, we find one entitled: *That, in the Spiritual, Good or Evil Meaning of the Word, all Men are Anthropophagi.* It begins: "Man at heart, or, to use the language of Scripture, the inner man, does not live on tangible nourishment, on material bread ; he lives, and that not in the symbolical, but in the most real meaning of the word, entirely upon other inner men, whose hearts and words are his food."

The great religious mystery ultimately became the centre round which even philosophical thought revolved. Henrik Steffens may serve as an example. This writer, in whose character, as Julian Schmidt[1] aptly remarks, "there is an undeniable strain of innate servility," was appointed to conduct the trial of the demagogues in Breslau. It was a task which he accomplished in a spirit at variance with sound human reason and the natural sense of justice, and during its performance he gave expression to the most reactionary religious sentiments, entirely forgetful of the pantheism of his youth. In the essay, *How I Once More Became a Lutheran*, he writes: "The Holy Sacrament is the chief individualising process in Christianity ; by its means the whole mystery of the redemption enters in all its fulness into the receptive personality. The fertilising stream of

[1] Jul. Schmidt, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, ii. 307.

grace, which, since the day of the great regeneration, has flowed through all nature and all history, and which matures us for a blessed future, here takes the form of the Saviour, in order that that which is all in all may be completely present. . . . By means of the satisfying personal presence of the Saviour, that which the Christian truly believes, that which pervades his whole life, and overcomes death, yet at the same time forces him back into the domain of the senses, here becomes certainty, enjoyment, nourishment. . . . To me the communion of the Lord's Supper is the highest, most important, most mysterious of all religious acts ; so important does it seem to me, that through it every doctrine acquires unfathomable significance."

We see, then, how tremendously important a part this sacrament plays in the Christian mysticism of the period under consideration. There existed a tender, almost an erotic, relation between the faithful and the consecrated elements. True believers were declared to be sensible of the presence of these elements at an extraordinary distance. Read what Görres writes on the subject in the second part of his *Mystik*. "To begin with what is holiest—" he says, "all who have attained to the higher spiritual life are aware, at a prodigious distance, of the presence of the Host." A number of examples of this are given, and we are told in the preface that all the facts instanced are vouched for by numerous witnesses, that these witnesses were the most reliable imaginable, either priests or pious laymen, and that they were particularly favourably situated for making the necessary observations. And we not only learn that saintly believers can detect the Host, no matter where it may be hidden, but that the Host feels such an attraction towards them, that it springs from the priest's hand into their mouths. Sometimes the priest actually feels that it is violently torn out of his hands, drawn like steel by a magnet ; and the saintly, in their turn, are so forcibly attracted to the holy substance that they are carried through the air to it.

Nowhere in all Kleist's writings has mysticism taken such strange possession of a perfectly pagan, not to say

wanton, theme as in his *Amphitryon*, which is an adaptation of Molière's well-known comedy. The story, not a very easy one to treat, is as follows. During Amphitryon's absence, Jupiter assumes his form and visits his wife, Alcmene, who believes the god to be her husband. Amphitryon returns, and a whole series of comical confusions ensue between the real and the pretended husband, the real slave, Sosias, and Mercury as Sosias. At last the true state of affairs is explained, and Amphitryon has to console himself with the consideration that there is nothing dishonourable in such a relationship with Jupiter,—a moral theory which it must have been very much to the interest of Louis the Fourteenth to defend and propagate.

"Mon nom, qu'incessamment toute la terre adore,
Étouffe ici le bruit, qui pouvait éclater ;
Un partage avec Jupiter
N'a rien du tout qui déshonore."

In genuine French fashion, Molière makes the collision between the husband and the lover the main point in his play ; and when Alcmene upbraids Jupiter for the hard words he (*i.e.* Amphitryon) has used to her, the god takes refuge in the following fine distinction :—

"L'époux, Alcmène, a commis tout le mal ;
C'est l'époux qu'il vous faut regarder en coupable :
L'amant n'a point de part à ce transport brutal,
Et de vous offenser son cœur n'est point capable.
Il a de vous, ce cœur, pour jamais y penser,
Trop de respect et de tendresse ;
Et si de faire rien à vous pouvoir blesser
Il avait eu la coupable faiblesse,
De cent coups à vos yeux il voudrait le percer.
Mais l'époux est sorti de ce respect soumis
Où pour vous on doit toujours être ;
A son dur procédé l'époux s'est fait connaître,
Et par le droit d'hymen il s'est cru tout permis."

Jupiter expresses himself, we see, with the polished gallantry of a courtier. At the close of the play the bystanders congratulate the wretched Amphitryon, and Sosias recites an

epilogue, in which the whole matter is treated from the comical point of view, and the moral pointed that the less said about such affairs the better.

Kleist naturally saw the subject in quite a different light. It is obvious that his Romantic mind was attracted first and foremost by the "Doppelgängerei;" then came the possibility of playing, faintly but clearly, on one of the most important mysteries of the Christian faith. Alcmene's husband is not the father of Hercules, yet the conception was no violation of her marriage vow; it was immaculate; the being to which she gives birth is not the child of a man, but of a god. Therefore, in the most important scene between Jupiter and Alcmene, the former is pantheistically exalted to the rank of the great world-spirit; he is not the wanton Olympian of the Greeks, he is as divine and spiritual as the "Absolute" of the *Naturphilosophie.* He says to Alcmene:—

"Nimmst Du die Welt, sein grosses Werk, wohl wahr?
Siehst Du ihn in der Abendröthe Schimmer,
Wenn sie durch schweigende Gebüsche fällt?
Hörst Du ihn beim Gesaüsel der Gewässer,
Und bei dem Schlag der üpp'gen Nachtigall?
Verkündigt nicht umsonst der Berg ihn Dir,
Gethürmt gen Himmel, nicht umsonst ihn Dir
Der felszerstiebten Katarakten Fall?
Wenn hoch die Sonn' in seinen Tempel strahlt,
Und, von der Freude Pulsschlag eingeläutet,
Ihn alle Gattungen Erschaff'ner preisen,
Steigst Du nicht in des Herzens Schacht hinab
Und betest Deinen Götzen an?"[1]

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[1] "Art thou not conscious of him in the world, his work?
Dost thou not see him in the sunset glow
That falls so softly on the silent woods?
Dost thou not hear him in the rippling stream,
And in the nightingale's melodious notes?
Is it in vain the heaven-high mountains speak,
And hissing foam of rock-torn waterfall?
When bright the sun into his temple shines,
And all created life pulsates with joy,
And magnifies its great Creator's name,
Dost thou not seek the shrine of thy pure heart
And worship there thine idol?"

Therefore, also, Alcmene is repeatedly addressed as "Thou Holy One!"

> "Du bist, Du Heilige, vor jedem Zutritt
> Mit diamantnem Gürtel angethan.
> Auch selbst der Glückliche, den Du empfängst,
> Entlässt Dich schuldlos noch und rein." . . .[1]

Adam Müller wrote an enthusiastic, mystical preface to the play. And in one of his letters to Gentz he writes: "Hartmann has painted a grand picture, 'The Three Marys at the Sepulchre.' This and *Amphitryon* seem to me to herald a new period in art. For Amphitryon unmistakably treats of the immaculate conception of the Holy Virgin as well as of the mystery of love in general." Even Goethe felt this. He said: "The play contains nothing less than a new, Christian interpretation of the myth as a parallel to the overshadowing of Mary by the Holy Ghost."

In 1806 Kleist had resigned his appointment and left Königsberg. When the war broke out between France and Prussia, he was, from a misunderstanding, imprisoned for a time by the French. In 1808 he went to Dresden, where he became acquainted with Adam Müller. It was now Müller's ambition, as it had previously been Fr. Schlegel's, to influence men's minds in the capacity of prophet and apostle of Romanticism. He professed ardent admiration for Kleist, and, unfortunately, succeeded in gaining considerable power over him. Müller was a phrase-monger, who had acquired some little knowledge of several sciences, and was at this moment on the point of announcing a new philosophy, in which there was (so he maintained) none of the one-sidedness characteristic of all previous systems. Its distinguishing doctrine was the doctrine of "opposites," of the constantly changing, constantly renewed and superseded "opposite." According to Müller, the spirit of the eighteenth century and the spirit of Romanticism were only disguises of one and the same truth—

[1] "Thou art armed in adamant, thou holy one, against every approach of evil. The highly-favoured one embraced by thee leaves thee still innocent and pure."

a truth of which he no doubt believed himself to have entered into complete and enduring possession when he joined the Church of Rome in 1805.

For some time after his conversion to Catholicism, Müller's whole intellectual life resolved itself into mysticism. He studied "the mysterious life of the clouds," regarded his nervous fear of thunder and lightning as a special gift bestowed on him by Heaven, and believed himself able to foretell the intellectual development of genius by mathematical calculations. In course of time, in fellowship with Gentz, he entered the field of practical politics, beginning as a Prussian progressive patriot, ending as a reactionary in the service of Metternich.

In Dresden, in 1808, Müller and Kleist started the periodical, *Phöbus*, in which several of Kleist's best works first saw the light.

It is characteristic that what pleased Müller most in *Amphitryon* was exactly that element of Pagan-Christian mysticism, already referred to, which reveals itself in such a speech as the following almost literal reproduction of the words announcing the birth of Christ:—

"Dir wird ein Sohn geboren, dess Name Hercules."

He did not penetrate into the spirit of the work. The interest of the play centres in the character of Alcmene, the interest of her character in the vigour with which she refuses to allow her peace of mind to be disturbed and her feelings confused, and the interest of her tragic story in the anguish she suffers when, in spite of herself, her inmost feelings are agitated and perplexed by the appearance of her husband in different forms.

Goethe, whose genius enabled him, though he did not understand Kleist's character, to understand much of the working of his mind, made the profound remark that what he chiefly aimed at was "confusion of feeling" (Verwirrung des Gefühls). Kleist was in an abnormal degree dependent upon security of feeling. Confusion of feeling was to him the truest tragedy.

His own strong, undivided feeling was unsettled and

perplexed again and again. In conformance with the custom of his family, he became a Prussian officer; but family tradition and his own inclinations were at variance; he could not endure the discipline, and left the army. He fell in love and pledged himself. His feeling for Wilhelmine was strong, but his instinct of self-preservation as an artist was stronger; here, too, there was perplexity of feeling, and he broke off the engagement. He had the feeling that he was a poet, a genius, but the result of all his efforts was a conviction of his want of real capacity, and in dire perplexity he determined to enlist in the French army, hoping to find death in its next campaign. All this explains his perpetual circling round the theme of perplexity of feeling. We have the idea very plainly in the admirable little tale, *Die Marquise von O.* The Marquise knows as little as Alcmene who it is that has embraced her in the dark; her feelings, too, are perplexed and confused; her nearest and dearest suspect her; and when the Russian officer, whom she looks upon as her saviour, but who proves to be the delinquent, returns to her, loving and repentant, her innocent soul is rent by alternate paroxysms of hatred and love. In much the same manner, the sense of justice, originally so strong in the soul of *Michael Kohlhaas*, is confused by the wrongs he suffers.

Wounded pride led Kleist to quarrel with friends and acquaintances; a wounded sense of justice tempted him to insult Goethe. He sent his *Penthesilea* to the great master, whom he envied as much as he admired, and was bitterly disappointed when, as might have been expected, it was entirely disapproved of. Goethe, who, unfortunately, was only keen-sighted as regarded the repellent side of Kleist's character, said of him: "In spite of my honest intention to be sympathetic and judge mildly, Kleist aroused in me nothing but shuddering aversion, resembling that produced by a body which nature has made beautiful, but which is attacked by some incurable disease." When the comedy, *Der zerbrochene Krug* ("The Broken Jar"), failed in Weimar, owing to Goethe's arbitrary rearrangement of its acts, Kleist's feelings became entirely "confused," and he wrote epigrams

on the great man's private life, among others the low, ugly one on the child, "the precocious genius," who wrote the epithalamium for his own parents' wedding-day.

It is this same confusion of feeling which gives their morbidness to all his productions. Even *Michael Kohlhaas*, that masterpiece of the art of story-telling, at the beginning of which each character is drawn with the precision of genius, ends in a kind of dream-like confusion. Towards the close of the story there appear two spectral figures—the sickly and at last half-insane Elector of Saxony, and an extraordinary gipsy woman, who, we are given to understand, is possessed by the spirit of Kohlhaas's dead wife—characters which contrast very forcibly with the simple, sane personages introduced to us at the beginning. *Die heilige Cäcilie* (St. Cecilia) is a Catholic legend, with a moral pointed against iconoclasm. The author revels here with a certain satisfaction in superstitious ideas ; he makes the saint punish the haters and destroyers of the art treasures of the Church with sudden madness.

Kleist early became addicted to indulgence in opium, a fact of which some of these works remind us.

In the year 1809 the poet appears as an ardent political agitator. Now, for a time, his voice sounds clear and full. He reproaches his countrymen with not having sufficient confidence in the mysterious power of the heart. He calls Napoleon a sinner, whose iniquity it is beyond the power of human language to express. Such resistance as has been offered to the French seems to him contemptibly weak. He dislikes Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, sneers at Fichte himself as a pedant who talks but cannot act, and expresses unbounded contempt for the members of the *Tugendbund* and their puerile inactivity. He writes a tragedy, *Die Hermannsschlacht*, with the object of inciting his countrymen to treat Napoleon as Hermann (Arminius) treated Varus. The following lines in it are aimed at the laggard youth of the day:—

> "Die schreiben, Deutschland zu befreien,
> Mit Chiffren, schicken mit Gefahr des Lebens
> Einander Boten, die die Römer hängen,

Versammeln sich um Zwielicht—essen, trinken,
Und schlafen, kommt die Nacht, bei ihren Frauen.
. . . . . .
Die Hoffnung : morgen stirbt Augustus
Lockt sie, bedeckt mit Schmach und Schande,
Von einer Woche in die andere."[1]

So little care does he bestow on the historical colouring of this play that he makes Hermann talk of a "bill" (of exchange), and Varus compare the leader of the Cheruski to a Dervish.

He wanted such a war as the Spaniards used to wage, with murder and perjury, burning villages and poisoned wells.

The battle of Wagram shattered all his hopes. Aghast, he asked if there were no such thing as justice upon earth.

Things stood badly now with Kleist—no comfort in public life, no prospects in private life, no money, no employment, no approbation, no encouragement. His nearest and dearest did not appreciate him. Shortly before his death he writes to a motherly friend : "I would rather die ten times over than endure again what I lately endured in Frankfort, sitting at the dinner-table between my two sisters. The thought that what I have actually done, be it little or much, is not acknowledged by them at all, that I am looked upon as an utterly useless member of society, no longer worthy of the slightest sympathy, not only robs me of the future, but poisons the past to me."

Unwilling as he was to return to a profession he had given up twelve years before, it at last seemed to him that the only possible way in which he could earn his bread was by re-entering the army. He did not even own money enough to procure an officer's outfit. An appeal to Hardenberg for assistance was left unanswered. It was exactly at this time that Prussia was compelled to enter into an alliance with Napoleon against Russia. Can one imagine greater "confusion of feeling" than was now the lot of the unhappy

[1] "They write their plans for liberating Germany in cipher, and send them to each other by messengers whom the Romans catch and hang ; they meet in the dusk, they eat, they drink, and sleep, when night comes, with their wives. . . . The hope that Augustus may die to-morrow leads them to live on thus, covered with shame, from one week to another."

patriot? The author of the *Hermannsschlacht*, the mortal enemy of Napoleon, forced, as a Prussian officer, to fight for the humiliator of his country!

This last collision of duties broke his heart. "My soul is so spent," he writes, "that I feel as if the very daylight that shines on me when I put my head out at the window hurts me."

He was ripe for the irrevocable decision. Through Müller he had made the acquaintance of Frau Henriette Vogel, a gifted woman, who, like himself, suffered from melancholia, and who imagined that she had an incurable disease. This lady reminded him one day, that in an early stage of their friendship he had promised to do anything she might require of him, let it be what it might. He replied that he was ready at any moment to fulfil his promise. "Then kill me," she said. "My sufferings are so great that I can no longer endure life. I don't believe, though, for a moment that you will do it—the men of to-day are not men at all." This was enough for Kleist. In November 1811 he and Henrietta drove together to a little inn on the shore of the Wannsee, a small lake near Potsdam. They were apparently in the best of spirits, full of jest and merriment all that day and until the afternoon of the next, when they went down to a retired spot on the shore, and Kleist shot his friend through the left breast and himself through the head. They had previously written a strange, mournfully humorous letter to Adam Müller's wife. It runs as follows:—

"Heaven knows, my dear, good friend, what strange feeling, half sorrowful, half glad, moves us to write to you at this hour—when our souls, like two lightsome aërial voyagers, are preparing to take flight from the world. For you must know that we had determined to leave no p.p.c. cards upon our friends and acquaintances. The reason probably is, that we have thought of you a thousand times in as many happy moments, and pictured to ourselves a thousand times how you would have laughed good-naturedly if you had seen us together in the green or the red room. Yes, the world is a strange place! It is not unfitting that we two, Jette and I, two sorrowful, melancholy beings, who

have always complained of each other's coldness, should have come to love each other dearly, the best proof of which is, that we are now about to die together.

"Farewell, our dear, dear friend! May you be happy here upon earth, as it is doubtless possible to be! As for us, we have no desire for the joys of this world; our dream is of the plains of heaven and the heavenly suns, in whose light we shall wander with long wings upon our shoulders. Adieu! A kiss from me, the writer, to Müller. Tell him to think of me sometimes, and to continue to be a brave soldier of God, fighting against the devil of foolishness, who holds the world in his chains."

Postscript in Henriette's writing:—

> "Doch, wie dies alles zugegangen,
> Erzähl' ich euch zur andern Zeit,
> Dazu bin ich zu eilig heut.[1]

"Farewell, my dear friends! And do not forget to think, in joy and in sorrow, of the two strange beings who are now about to set out on the great voyage of discovery." HENRIETTE."

(In Kleist's handwriting)—"Written in the green room, on the 21st of November, 1811. H. v. K."

Kleist was the most intractable character in the intellectual world of the Germany of that day; he had, moreover, too much heart, too strong feelings. After he had given up all hope of attaining to a knowledge of the truth, he tried to build upon the foundation of feeling. As author he was able to do it; his *Michael Kohlhaas* is based upon the feeling of justice, *Käthchen von Heilbronn* upon the feeling of absolute devotion. But the real world to which he himself belonged had no use for strong, unmixed feeling such as his. He did not find it in others, and wherever he followed it himself, the consequences were disastrous. Alas! no; nothing was quite certain on this earth, not even his own vocation!

No one could prize decision, unity of character, more than he did, and never was there a more uncertain, divided,

[1] "How it all happened I'll tell you again; to-day I'm in too great a hurry."

morbid man. He was always despairing, always wavering between the highest endeavour and the inclination to commit suicide. This explains how it is that we see him, the greatest of the Romanticists, liable to almost all the errors which distinguish his contemporaries. His own really fine, noble nature was spoiled very much as are most of the characters in his works, by sinister, disastrous peculiarities, which slacken the will and destroy the elasticity of the mind. Yet Heinrich von Kleist has assured himself a place in literature, like all others who have won places there, by the vigour and the passion with which he lived and wrote.[1]

In the other notable dramatist of the Romantic School there was far less to disintegrate. He was the genuine Romanticist from the very first.

Zacharias Werner was born in Königsberg in 1768. He was the son of a professor at the University, who also held the post of dramatic censor. Hence, even as a child, Zacharias had the opportunity of seeing plays almost daily, and in his earliest youth he was able to make himself acquainted with all the technicalities of the stage. His mother, according to Hoffmann, "was richly endowed with both intellect and imagination." Her mind inclined to earnest, highly imaginative mysticism, and she exercised no inconsiderable influence upon her son's ardent imagination ; but in course of time she became insane, one of her delusions being that she herself was the Virgin Mary, and her son the Saviour of the world.

As a student, Zacharias, who was of a sanguine, sensual temperament, led an exceedingly dissolute life. In his twentieth year he published a volume of lyric poems, which, like the earliest writings of Friedrich Schlegel and the other Romanticists, are entirely untouched by mysticism ; they inveigh, in the style of the eighteenth century, against "sanctimoniousness, pious stupidity, hypocrisy, and Jesuitism." Nevertheless, while still comparatively young, he himself adopted the sanctimonious style. Though he continued to be dissipated, he cannot exactly be called a hypocrite, for

1 Adolf Wilbrandt, *Heinrich von Kleist*, 1863; Otto Brehm, *Heinrich von Kleist*, 1884.

he sinned and repented alternately. The distinguishing feature of his character was instability, as he himself confesses in his last poem, *Unstäts Morgenpsalm* ("The Unstable Man's Morning Hymn"); and long before, in the prologue to *Söhne des Thals* ("Sons of the Vale"), he had called himself an inconstant creature, "perpetually erring, lamenting, warning."

Religious motives induced Werner to join the Freemasons; he believed that this order would prove the means of diffusing throughout the whole world a new and more sincere spirit of piety. Pecuniary motives induced him to accept a Government secretaryship; and in 1795, not long after addressing three enthusiastic poems (a war song, a call to arms, and a lament) to the unfortunate Poles, he took up his abode in the capacity of a Prussian Government official in the conquered city of Warsaw, where he spent ten pleasant years. He married three times during the course of those ten years. The first two marriages were so ill-advised that in both cases the divorce promptly followed the wedding; the third, with a particularly charming Polish lady, lasted for some years. From her he was divorced in 1805. On this occasion Werner took all the blame upon himself. "I am not," he writes to Hitzig at the time, "a bad man, but I am in many ways a weakling, though in others God grants me strength. I am timid, capricious, miserly, uncleanly. You know it yourself." Not a flattering portrait.

Schleiermacher's *Lectures on Religion* and, following on these, the writings of Jakob Böhme made no small impression on him. Art and religion now became to him one and the same thing. "Why," he writes to Hitzig, "have we not one name for these two synonyms?" They signify to him what he at one time calls the "vivid sense of the nearness of great Nature," at another, "the simple, humble outpouring of the pure soul into the pure stream (of Nature)." His literary opinions are, he declares, "exactly those of Tieck." In Warsaw he still writes coldly of the Catholic Church; he defends it, not as "a system of faith, but as a newly reopened mine of mythology."

Death bereft him on one day, the 24th of February, 1804, of his mother and his most intimate friend, Mnioch,

a Pole—hence the title of his fatalistic tragedy, *The Twenty-Fourth of February*, written ten years later.

Having solicited all his patrons and friends in turn to procure him an appointment with as little work and as much remuneration as possible, he finally obtained an easy and profitable post in Berlin, through the influence of a minister who was deeply interested in both religion and freemasonry. He gave himself up for a time to all the amusements and dissipations of the capital; but, after the defeat of the Prussians by Napoleon, he threw up his appointment and began to lead a wandering life. He was alone and free, for all his marriages had been childless, and he had inherited a fortune at his mother's death. He travelled through Germany and Austria, that "blessed land," as he calls it, made the acquaintance of Madame de Staël, and visited her at Coppet. In Weimar he succeeded in obtaining a pension from the Prince-Primate (Fürst-Primas) Dalberg. Professor Passow, who made his acquaintance in Weimar, wrote to Voss: "I dislike Werner exceedingly, for the reason that I have never seen him twice the same. This is the consequence of his insufferable anxiety to please every one. It depends entirely upon his company whether he is the low libertine or the pious devotee of the most modern, most spiritual type." A clergyman named Christian Mayr obtained great influence over him. Mayr was a fanatic and an eccentric. In order to realise one of the visions in the Book of Revelations and to attain heavenly wisdom, he swallowed the greater part of a Bible, and was dangerously ill in consequence; he shot with a pistol at any member of his congregation who fell asleep when he was preaching; and he believed that he could, during the celebration of the sacrament, produce real flesh and blood. This man was desirous that Werner should join a great secret society, the "Kreuzesbrüder im Orient." At first Werner was very enthusiastic in the matter, then he began to entertain doubts, and these doubts partly led to his conversion to Catholicism.

In November 1809, after paying a visit at Coppet, he went to Rome, where he spent several years. His conversion took place in 1810. During his years of wandering he

had led the maddest of lives, dividing each day between low debauchery and religious excitement, between gross sensual indulgence and solemn intercourse with the Deity. The fragments of his diary, published in two small volumes by Schütz, betray a coarse immorality, an obscenity of thought, and a shamelessness of expression, which are rendered only the more repulsive by the outbursts of miserable remorse and self-accusation which interrupt the detailed descriptions of erotic experiences.

In a testamentary epistle to his friends (dated September 1812) he mentions the two motives which withhold him from a public confession. "The one is, that to open a plague pit is dangerous to the health of the still uninfected bystanders; the other, that, in my writings (for which God forgive me), among a wilderness of poisonous fungi and noxious weeds there is to be found here and there a healing herb, from which the poor sick people to whom it might be useful would assuredly shrink back in horror if they knew the pestilential spot in which it had grown."

When Werner had (characteristically enough *after* his conversion) studied theology and made himself acquainted with the Catholic ritual, he was ordained priest. It was in Vienna, in 1814, at the time of the Congress, that he made his first appearance as a preacher. He was most successful. People were impressed by his tall, spare, ascetic figure and his long thin face, with the prominent nose and the dark brown eyes gleaming under heavy eyebrows. He preached to enormous crowds sermons of which the Monk's sermon in *Wallenstein's Lager* may serve to give a faint idea. They were full of high-flown bombast and disgusting obscenities, united wit and wisdom with ascetic nonsense and tiresome twaddle, overflowed with denunciations of heretics and eulogies of the rosary.[1]

Werner died in Vienna in 1823. He is the representative-in-chief of mysticism in literature. His life is the key to his works—works which profoundly impressed his contemporaries, but which interest us chiefly from the pathological point of view. He undoubtedly possessed considerable poetic gifts.

[1] Hitzig, *Lebens-Abriss Zacharias Werners*, 1823; Schütz, *Zacharias Werner, Biographie und Charakteristik*, 1841.

His verse is melodious and falls caressingly on the ear, like the church music of southern lands. His characters are generally well planned (take, for example, Franz von Brienne in the first and second acts of *Die Templer auf Cypern*—"The Knights Templar in Cyprus"), and the action interests and keeps us in suspense; but the core and kernel of it all, the threefold kernel of sensuality, religion, and cruelty, is ill-flavoured and unwholesome.

His first important work, *Die Söhne des Thals*, which is in two parts, of six acts each, deals with the Order of the Templars. He was obviously inspired to it by the ideas of freemasonry, ideas which had impressed Schubert, had played a part in *Wilhelm Meister*, and had considerably influenced his own private life.

In this work the encasing of one idea within another —from the very beginning a favourite device of the Romanticists—takes the form of everything circling round a central mystery, the mystery of the secret society; we penetrate ever farther and farther in, but as we do so, it seems to retreat from us. The Order of the Templars has its own particular mysteries, and we witness every detail of the initiation of the neophytes into these—in gloomy vaults, with all the paraphernalia of colossal skeletons, cryptic books, curtains, swords, palms, &c., &c. The meaning underlying it all is: "*Aus Blut und Dunkel quillt Erlösung*" (From blood and darkness issues redemption). But the order of Knights Templar is only a branch order; the great mother-order, "*das Thal*" (the Vale), is in possession, as we learn in the second part of the work, of all the higher mysteries and the higher power. But its inmost mystery, too, is only the purely negative idea of renunciation and sacrifice. Hidden voices proclaim "in a hollow, chanting tone"—

"Alles ist zum Seyn erkoren,
Alles wird durch Tod geboren,
Und kein Saatkorn geht verloren.
"Wer durch Blut und Nacht geschwommen,
Ist den Aengsten bald entnommen,
Blutiger, sei uns willkommen!"[1]

[1] "Life is the destiny of everything; through death comes birth; not one grain of seed is lost. He who has struggled through blood and darkness has overcome. All hail, O bleeding knight!"

We gain some idea of the extent to which the mysteries are utilised in the elaboration of stage decoration and costumes from the fact that in the twelfth scene of the fifth act, which consists of sixty-four lines, only six are dialogue, the remainder being devoted to directions regarding "a great burial mound, covered with roses, with transparencies of an angel, a lion, a bull, and an eagle, disposed at the four corners"—the costumes to be worn by the dignitaries of the "Vale," of which some are to be cloth of gold, some silver, some sky blue, some blood red—and the incense, the harps, the bells, the crowns and crowns of thorns, the banners, and the "colossal statue of Isis," required in the scene.

The Order of Knights Templar has degenerated. The mother-order determines to abolish it altogether, and condemns its Grand Master, the noble and heroic Molay, to be burned, although he is entirely guiltless of the decadence of his order—has, in fact, striven hard to arrest it. The Archbishop, who tries him, is convinced of the injustice of the accusations brought against him, and loves and admires him, but is compelled to obey orders. Molay faces death with as great calm as Paludan-Müller's Kalanus ; in fact, he longs for the "purifying flames." The bystanders sympathise with him, and cry to him to make his escape ; but, like Kalanus, he resists all entreaties. The Archbishop's feeling for him is shared by every one ; he is surrounded by a crowd of sentimental executioners, who consign him to the flames with expressions of the utmost admiration and esteem. They are cruel, sentimental fanatics, like Werner himself. Every character in the play is tainted with repulsive sentimentality. Molay's old comrade in arms, when prevented from rescuing him, says :—

> "Du böser Jakob Du !—Pfui ! sterben will er,
> Verlassen seinen Waffenbruder !—Jakob !
> Du musst nicht sterben ! hörst Du ?" [1]

But the guiltless Molay dies. There is the same play upon the Christian mystery here as in Kleist's drama.

[1] "You wicked Jacques ! What ? Die and leave your old comrade ? No, no, Jacques—you must not do it."

Molay is venerated like a second Christ, even by his executioners. After his death a miracle happens. "Sunlight gilds the scene. Above the entrance to the Vale cavern, below the brightly illuminated name 'Jesus,' there appear the names 'John,' 'J. B. Molay,' and 'Andrew,' also in bright transparencies." All the crusaders fall upon their knees. "Long, solemn pause, during which there come from the interior of the cavern the muffled sounds of the 'Holy! Holy! Holy!' sung by the elders of the Order of the Vale to the usual tune, with an accompaniment of harps and bells."

Martyrdom is Werner's specialty. He is at home in such subjects as beating to death with clubs, boiling in oil, and the tortures of the rack. He revels in agonies, as does Görres, whose satisfaction we almost seem to feel as we read of all the mysteries of martyrdom in the first part of his *Christian Mysticism*. "The sacrificial victims are stretched upon the rack or the wheel, and all their limbs are twisted out of joint by means of screws . . . while the lictors scorch their sides with torches or tear them with iron claws. Chains are sometimes drawn round their bodies until their ribs are broken; their chests and eyes are pierced with pointed reeds; their jaws are broken with heavy blows of the torturer's fist; and, though the victims are now hardly drawing breath, nails are hammered through their feet and red-hot iron rods are laid upon their tenderest parts and allowed to burn themselves in," &c., &c.

In Werner's drama, *Attila*, a young man whom Attila loves is accused of perjury and confesses his guilt. Attila, who is an emotional, sentimental enthusiast, embraces him, shedding burning tears, and then orders him to be torn asunder by horses. Cruel sentimentality, fanatic brutality, is Romantic wont. Along with Attila we have Pope Leo, another character who seems to have escaped from the pages of Görres' *Mysticism*—this time undoubtedly from the chapter treating of the height from the ground to which the enthusiast in his religious rapture is at times raised; for, while he is praying, Leo "raises himself higher and higher, until he is resting only on the tips of his toes." He sym-

pathises with Attila, and has a sort of magnetic influence over him.

In *Martin Luther, oder die Weihe der Kraft* ("The Consecration of Strength"), the mystery of religious consecration is the subject. The play opens significantly with a scene of the Novalis type, miners going down into and being drawn up from a mine. The representation of Luther is more suggestive of a Catholic saint than of the Protestant reformer. Of Katharina von Bora, too, a saintly character is made. Luther and she are accompanied throughout the play by guardian angels, Luther by the boy Theobald, who is really art in the shape of a seraph, and Katharina by a girl named Therese, who represents faith. A few years after Werner had thus sung the praises of the Reformation, he was converted; whereupon he wrote a poem, *Die Weihe der Unkraft*, full of such sentiments regarding his drama as: "Durch dies Gaukelblendwerk sprach ich der Wahrheit Hohn!" (With this delusive mummery I set at nought the truth.)

The subject of his last tragedy, *Die Mutter der Makkabäer*, offered glorious opportunities for introducing all the tortures described in the legends of the martyrs; it abounds in physical suffering and religious ecstasies. The sons of Salome must either eat of the flesh of the sacrifice offered to Jupiter or die the most cruel death. The comical idea of its being a matter of life and death whether children taste certain food or not, is treated with the most overwhelming solemnity. In a state of supernatural excitement, Salome entreats her children, one by one, to allow themselves to be impaled, flayed, burned, &c. The sentimental chief torturer, Antiochus, admires Salome intensely; he actually falls upon his knees before her, crying—

"Du bist kein irdisch Weib!—Solch Opfer spendet
Kein menschlich Wesen!—Segne mich, Du, vom Olymp gesendet!"[1]

And the equally sentimental Salome blesses him. Her son Benoni, too, blesses his murderer, immediately after which his hands and feet are cut off, and he is boiled in oil.

[1] "Thou art not of this earth! No mortal offers such a sacrifice! Bless me, thou daughter of Olympian gods!"

Presently two loud axe-strokes are heard—Abir's feet have been cut off. Juda is tortured next; and so on it goes. Antiochus, the barbarous king, or Werner, the equally barbarous poet, has the children broken on the wheel joint by joint, and their limbs torn off. The mother, who is compelled to witness it all, feels nothing but the rapturous bliss of martyrdom; and when Antiochus, in his insane sentimentality, bows before her a second time, "deeply moved," crying: "Willst, grosse Niobe, Du Dich von mir im Zorne trennen?" ("And must thou part from me in wrath, great Niobe?"), she lays her right hand on his head, and says "very solemnly": "Ich weiss, dass mein Erlöser lebt!—Lern' sterbend ihn erkennen!" ("I know that my Redeemer liveth!—Ere death come, mayst thou know him too!").

In the last scene the background opens, and we see the instruments of torture and the huge copper full of boiling oil, in which Benoni lies. His wife is staring down into it. The flames of the stake are still blazing. Salome's spirit appears above them and extinguishes them.

And there was a time when this was considered poetry! Goethe took a warm interest in Werner, and had several of his plays performed in the court theatre at Weimar. In 1808 he wrote of him to Jacobi: "It seems strange to an old pagan like me, that I can see the cross planted on my own territory, and hear Christ's blood and wounds preached poetically, without its being actually offensive to me. The standpoint to which philosophy has raised us makes this degree of tolerance obligatory. We have learned to value the ideal, even when it manifests itself in the strangest forms."

Few educated men will be inclined to take so mild and tolerant a view of the matter to-day. The development is utterly repugnant to us. For we have seen to what it led. We have seen that this "Christian poetry" helped to bring about the worst intellectual reaction of modern times. Men played so long with the idea of the purifying flames of the stake that they began to extol them in sober earnest. It is but a step from Werner to Görres, who ardently defends exorcism of evil spirits and punishment of witchcraft; and the

distance is no greater between Görres and Joseph de Maistre, who writes: "In many a well-governed country in Europe they say of a man who has set fire to an inhabited house and been burned with it: 'It is only what he deserved.' Is a human being who has been guilty of any amount of theoretical and practical (*i.e.* religious) evil-doing less deserving of being burned? When one reflects that it was undoubtedly in the power of the Inquisition to have prevented the French Revolution, one cannot feel certain that the sovereign who calmly discarded such a weapon did not deal a fatal blow to humanity."

If Romantic Christianity is, as Ruge says, the Christianity which cannot be resolved into humanitarianism, then Joseph de Maistre is a genuine Romanticist.

The whole history of Romanticism substantiates Ruge's famous definition: "A Romanticist is an author who, aided by all the intellectual advantages of our day, assails the periods of 'enlightenment' and of revolution, and reprobates and combats the principle of pure humanitarianism in the domains of science, art, morality, and politics."

XVI

ROMANTIC LITERATURE AND POLITICS

In its first period, Romanticism is distinctly non-political. It exalts the established order of things (*vide* Novalis), it submissively acknowledges the authority of the king and of the Church, but in its purely literary productions it is, generally speaking, politically colourless.

Take Tieck's satiric comedies. In their outward form there is something Aristophanic; but their satire is never directed against any political character or tendency. It is aimed at "enlightenment;" and from Tieck's biographer we learn exactly what the poet understood by this word. At that time, says Köpke, the most prominent and respected men in Berlin, those who were still the leaders of public opinion, were of the school of Frederick the Great. The prevailing opinions of the eighteenth century had become their second nature. They were moral, conscientious men, who, in all the different departments of administration, science, and literature, devoted themselves zealously, and often with extraordinary industry, to their duties. Whether government officials, theologians, teachers, critics, popular philosophers, or poets, they all aimed at making religion and science useful, and at educating mankind by external provisions and rules. Intelligibility and popularity being to them all-important, they naturally diluted and levelled everything to one general plane of mediocrity. A certain blameless philistinism became their moral ideal, an ideal which seemed poor and tame in comparison with the old fervour of faith. Lessing was their prophet, and they believed themselves to be perpetuating his tradition. We can readily understand that they fell foul of Goethe, which indeed Lessing himself had done, and that they had a narrow

conception of the significance and value of imagination. To them it was only the handmaid of utility, and of no value except as an instrument in the service of morality.

Everywhere throughout Tieck's writings we come upon mockery of this moral literary tendency. Take, for instance, *Der Gestiefelte Kater* ("Puss in Boots").—Hinze, the cat, is taking an evening walk, absorbed in melancholy thought. He begins to sing a hunting song. A nightingale strikes up in a bush close at hand. "She sings magnificently, this songstress of the groves," says Hinze; "but think how delicious she must *taste!* Happy indeed are the great of the earth; they can eat as many nightingales and larks as they fancy. We poor common people have to be content with the song, with the beauty, with the indescribably sweet harmony.—It is terrible that I cannot hear anything sing without wanting to eat it."

Hisses from the pit. The worthy audience is shocked by the cat's ignoble train of thought. So Hinze lets the nightingale alone; but presently, when a rabbit comes bounding by, he catches him adroitly and puts him into his bag. It is his intention, by the gift of this rabbit, to win the king's heart for his master. "The creature," he reflects aloud, "is a sort of cousin of mine; but it's the way of the world nowadays—kinsman against kinsman, brother against brother!" He is presently strongly tempted to eat the rabbit himself, but overcomes the desire, and cries: "Fie! for shame, Hinze! Is it not the duty of the truly noble to sacrifice themselves and their inclinations to the happiness of their fellow-creatures? It is the end for which we were created, and he who cannot do it—oh! it were better for him that he had never been born!" He is about to retire, but loud applause and cries of *Da Capo!* oblige him to repeat the last speech, after which he bows, and goes off with the rabbit. The audience is in the seventh heaven of delight—Hinze's speech is as effective as one of Iffland's tirades.

The satire in Tieck's *Daümling* ("Hop o' my Thumb") is also of a literary nature, being directed against the neo-classic tendency, and in particular against Goethe. Such a theme,

treated, as it was in part, in the dignified metre of Greek tragedy, afforded many opportunities for drollery. All the incidents of the medieval fairy-tale are viewed from the antique standpoint. Of the seven-league boots, for instance, we read: "Trust me; I see quite well that these boots have come down to us from old Greek times. No man in our day produces work like that—so strong, so simple, such noble lines, such stitching! No, no! this is the work of Phidias, there is no doubt about it. Look! When I place the one in this position—how noble, how plastic, how grand in its simplicity! No superfluity, no ornament, no Gothic detail, none of the romantic medley of our days—when sole, leather, flaps, folds, blacking, varnish, must all contribute to produce variety, brilliancy, a dazzling resplendence in which there is nothing ideal. Nowadays the leather must shine, the sole must creak when one sets one's foot down: wretched rhyming trickery of which the ancients knew nothing." Several of Goethe's favourite words are employed in this more sarcastic than witty description.

Tieck shows most wit in defending himself against the accusation of exaggerated sentimentality. His satire might quite well apply to the modern admirers of Prosper Mérimée. He revenges himself upon his critics by placing their objections in the mouth of Leidgast, the cannibal, who comes home, smells human flesh, and determines to eat Hop o' my Thumb and his brothers and sisters for breakfast next morning. In the meantime they are to be kept in the garret. "But what if your own three little ones should awake?" objects his wife. "Well, what then?" "The strange children would not be safe. Yours are so eager for human flesh that they have lately actually tried to suck *my* blood." "You don't say so? I should never have credited them with so much sense and understanding." His wife weeps. "Be done with this sentimentality, wife. I cannot bear an effeminate education. I have strictly forbidden them all these prejudices, superstitions, and enthusiasms. Untutored, unadulterated nature! that's the thing for me."

However varied the objects of Tieck's satire may be, it

is always literary satire; it never crosses the boundary between literature and life. Iffland and Kotzebue, the bombastic classic style and narrow-minded philistine criticism, the text of *The Magic Flute*, Nicolai's travellers' tales, academic pedantry and the *Litteraturzeitung*—these are the unfailing scapegoats.

Occasionally, in striking at "enlightenment" and everything thereto pertaining, he has a half accidental thrust at the powers that be. The king in *Puss in Boots*, for instance, who places the court scientist on the same level with the court fool, who lives for military parades, loves to listen to repetitions of the figures arrived at in astronomical calculations, and bestows his favour in return for a tasty rabbit, certainly does not represent royalty in the most advantageous light. But this happened half accidentally. In the same play the law goes by the name of Popanz (the bogey-man), is changed into a mouse, creeps into a mouse-hole, and is eaten by Hinze, who, not long after, shouts: 'Long live the Tiers Etat!' But this is no more nor less than a specimen of real Romantic nonsense, with no meaning in it at all. The only trace of real political satire to be found, is in one of Tieck's early works, *Hanswurst als Emigrant*, Hanswurst being no other than the Prince d'Artois, who, in his character of poor, stupid emigrant, has to ride on his servant's back for want of a horse. But this work remained unpublished during Tieck's lifetime.

It does not surprise us that Kotzebue failed in his attempts to get Tieck into disgrace for writing political satire. Having succeeded, in 1802, in gaining admission to the court, he, Kotzebue, endeavoured to revenge himself on his adversary by reading the parade scene from *Zerbino* to the king, interspersing malicious hints. It was an ineffectual endeavour, for the king took no notice. And Tieck was pleased and proud to be able to prove his innocence — the play had been written in 1790, under totally different conditions, and was founded entirely upon youthful impressions. His satisfaction was so far justifiable; for abusive personal satire is out of place in art. Nevertheless, the anecdote affects us tragi-comically. The poetry

was harmless enough, heaven knows. There was no cause for any king or government in the world to be in the least disturbed by such satire. Unluckily, the best satirical poetry is not of the kind that leaves every one unscathed. The comedies of Aristophanes, with which Tieck's admirers thought his worthy of comparison, were considerably less innocent and innocuous ; and all the really great satirical works of later days, such as Molière's *Tartuffe* or Beaumarchais' *Figaro*, have one characteristic in common—their action does not take place in the moon ; they make war on something besides inept poets and moralising poetry.

Romanticism, however, did not long maintain this aloofness from life and politics.

The year 1806 was a critical year for Prussia and Germany.[1] The country was entirely in the power of the foreign conqueror. But this is the very reason why all the great reforms trace their origin to this year. The depth of adversity reached was so great that an energetic upward struggle had become imperative. The indefatigable Baron von Stein began the reorganisation of Prussian public institutions ; Scharnhorst remodelled the army ; the state of the universities was inquired into ; and as one result of this last proceeding Fichte was called to Berlin in 1807. The appointment was a remarkable one in many respects. It was intended to show that henceforth a new and different spirit was to rule. When, in 1792, Fichte wrote his first work, *Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung* ("An Attempt at a Criticism of all Revelation"), he was afraid to publish it otherwise than anonymously. When, somewhat later, he brought out his *Zurückforderung der Denkfreiheit* ("Demand for the Restoration of Freedom of Thought"), he dared not even name the town in which the book was printed. It was published in "Heliopolis"—also anonymously. From his post of professor at Jena he was dismissed on a charge of atheism. But now that the day of need had come, he was suddenly appealed to, to rouse the youth of Germany. As every one is aware, his *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* ("Addresses to the German Nation") surpassed all expectation.

[1] Ruge, Werke, ii. 60, &c.

It had been no bad idea, this thrusting of the German flag into the hand of the persecuted philosopher. At the University of Berlin, with French bayonets gleaming outside the windows and French drums drowning his words, he delivered the memorable addresses which sounded the *réveille* in the ears of Germany, and did their part in driving those drums and bayonets out of the country. For from these lectures a general and powerful revulsion of feeling may be dated. In them Fichte's philosophy became a kind of national poetry. And what wonder that this poetry proved a torch, at which many other poetical torches were kindled—Körner's, Schenkendorf's, and Arndt's among the rest ?

The long-prepared-for war broke out in 1813, and ended, after various vicissitudes, in the downfall of foreign rule. But the War of Liberation, as it was called, has two aspects. It was a revolt against a monstrous tyranny, but a tyranny which represented many of the ideas of the Revolution. It was a war for hearth and home, but waged at the command of the old dynasties. The revolutionary tyranny was opposed in the interest of reactionary princes. Moreover, even in the ardour with which the struggle was maintained, there were two very different elements, which were so closely commingled that in the beginning it occurred to no one to distinguish between them, but which soon betrayed their opposite characters. The one element was national hatred of the French people—the national prejudice which seems to be inseparably connected with patriotism, and which led in this case to enthusiasm for everything German and contempt for everything French. The other element was pure love of freedom—the determination to attain political independence, to fight, not only in the name of Germany, but in the name of humanity, for human rights and privileges.

This dual feeling may be traced even in Fichte's addresses. He affirmed that only a people that had been a people from of old, a people that understood the depths of its own spirit, its own language, *i.e.* itself, could be free, and the liberators of the world ; "*and*," he added, "*the Germans are such a people.*" Teutonic national arrogance lay dormant

in these words. And the seed soon began to grow. The young, healthy love of freedom found expression in Theodor Körner's bold lyrics. It was Schiller's lyre that he touched, but the genius of a new era had tuned its strings in a new key. The patriotism of a whole group of other poets took the form of enthusiasm for the German Empire and a German Emperor, that is to say, for the Germany of the Middle Ages ; and these made the glories of the past their theme. Max von Schenkendorf sang mournfully and longingly of the days when—

> "Die hohen adligen Gestalten
> Am Rheinstrom auf und nieder wallten,"[1]

and when predatory nobles ruled town and country from their fortified castles. He wrote odes to the old cathedrals, groped with tremulous awe among the skeletons of saints and knights buried in their chapels.

One of the most famous of the patriotic poets was Ernst Moritz Arndt. With Arndt hatred of everything French became a fixed idea. His *Geist der Zeit* ("Spirit of the Times"), the first part of which appeared in 1806, had a very powerful influence on the minds of his countrymen. And while he was writing his manly, vigorous songs in praise of freedom, he was also occupied in attacking the French language and French fashions ; he even went the length of attempting to introduce a German national dress. At this same moment, Jahn, the famous introducer of gymnastics, the "Turnvater," as he is called, was earnestly engrossed with the idea of making the whole youth of Germany fit for war by means of physical exercises. In 1811, at Hasenhaide, near Berlin, he started his school of gymnastics ; but previous to this, following Arndt's example, he had published writings, in which, in affectedly violent language, he tried to inflame the spirit of patriotism. The old German mythology and heroic sagas, Hermann and the Teutoburgerwald, Wodan and the Druids, the sacred oaks, the divine primitive German warrior in his boldness and uncouthness, his unkempt hair flowing over his shoulders and

[1] "When men of noble, knightly mien trod the banks of the Rhine."

a club grasped in his gigantic fists, were anew elevated to the place of honour. German uncouthness was supposed to testify to German morality.

It was not long till all these patriotic ideas and enterprises were pressed into the service of reaction. The object of worship became, not the freedom that was to be won, but Germany's vanished past. Men began to study the history of their country with an ardour with which it had never been studied before, and a keen eye for all peculiarly German traits. With the brothers Grimm at their head, they turned their attention to the history and grammar of their own language, and in this domain, as in every other, fell foolishly in love with the past and its childish naïveté. Important as the results of these investigations have been to science, it is certain that in Germany they produced some of the worst enemies of liberty, men who sided with the past against the present.

The patriotic and the religious party soon made common cause. French immorality had been confronted with a peculiarly German morality ; now French free-thought was confronted with a peculiarly German Christianity. Because the religion of Germany's enemies paid homage to the human mind, with its lucidity and freedom, the religion of Germany was to be ecclesiastical Christianity, with its obscurity and tyranny. Believing that they were becoming more religious, they in reality became less so. For it is an indisputable truth, one that holds good in all ages and all countries, that, true religion being enthusiasm for the living spirit and idea of the times, as yet unrealised by the many, he who is filled with that living spirit will seem irreligious, but really be religious, whilst he who is filled with the spirit or faith of a bygone, a defunct age, will be most irreligious, but seem and be called religious.

The immature intellects of the War of Liberation were caught in the snares of Romanticism. It is significant that men who, like Arndt and Görres, were regarded as the champions of liberty, soon began to express most anti-liberal opinions. Arndt made a bitter attack upon what he called industrialism, *i.e.*, modern industrial con-

ditions, as opposed to the old guild system, and was loud in his condemnation of machinery and steam, which robbed human feet of their right (to walk), the labourer of his work, and mountain and valley of their meaning. He was anxious that any future additions to the ranks of the aristocracy should be prevented by the inscription of all noble names in a final roll, a "golden book;" and he advocated entail and primogeniture as the one sure defence against the general break-up of society by an inundation of the proletariat. Görres, who for a time retained some remembrance of the days when he edited *Das rothe Blatt*, ultimately became the author of *Christian Mysticism*, and such a fierce reactionary that he attacked the pietistic policy of Prussia as not sufficiently thorough-going, and brought on himself a reproof from Leo XII.

The Christian-Germanic reaction which was one of the results of the War of Liberation found very characteristic literary expression in a series of tales by a nobleman who had fought in the war as a cavalry officer, Baron de la Motte Fouqué. Fouqué is principally known to the reading world at large by his charming little story, *Undine*. As a specimen of Romantic "Naturpoesie" at its best, this tale is only inferior to Tieck's *Elfenmärchen* ("The Elves"). But Undine is the one really living figure which Fouqué has produced. The cause of his success in this case probably lay in the fact that he was depicting a being who was only half human, half an element of nature—a wave, spray, the cool freshness and wild movement of water—a being without a soul. Until Undine has given herself to the Knight, she stands in some magic relationship to the restless, soulless sea; it is she who flings its spray against the window, and makes it rise until the peninsula is changed into an island, and the Knight is a captive in the fisherman's hut. Fouqué, who was a poet without being a psychologist, found a subject exactly suited to his imaginative talent in this being, which corresponded to one of the elements, and hence itself consisted of but one life-element. (It was in Undine's image that Hans Christian Andersen created "The Little Mermaid.") The bridal

night brings a soul to Undine, and she is changed into the model German wife, obedient, tender, and sentimental. Her husband's harshness kills her. In her magnanimity she has caused the castle well to be covered with an enormous stone, in order to block up the only way by which her uncle, the water-spirit, Kühleborn, can enter the castle and avenge her. When, despite every warning, the Knight is faithless and marries again, and his arrogant bride has the stone removed from the well, inexorable fate compels Undine to rise out of its depths and bring him death in a kiss. Although the theme is genuinely medieval (borrowed, in fact, from Paracelsus, whose theory of the elemental spirits is founded upon old popular beliefs), and although in the course of its elaboration the author often relapses into sentimental piety, yet, to its decided advantage, a fresh pagan note is predominant in the story. Undine's originality lies in her pagan nature, as it reveals itself before she is baptized; and there is something genuinely Greek in the idea of its not being the skeleton with the scythe which comes for the dying man, but an elemental spirit which brings him death in a loving kiss.

But at the same time that Fouqué was embodying such originality and genius as he possessed in this little tale, he was also, under the influence of the great national movement, projecting the long series of romances of chivalry which began with *Der Zauberring* ("The Magic Ring"), published in 1815. To the romantic reactionaries *The Magic Ring* became a sort of gospel. Nobles and squires saw themselves reflected in all these old burnished shields and coats of mail, and rejoiced at the sight. But it was not a faithful historical picture which Fouqué exhibited. His age of chivalry is an imaginary age, in which stately, high-born men, clad in armour of burnished silver or of some dull metal inlaid with gold, and wearing silver helmets, plumed or unplumed, or iron helmets surmounted by golden eagles' wings, the visors sometimes raised, sometimes lowered, ride forth upon fiery chargers of all breeds and all colours, shiver each other's lances, and yet sit as if moulded in the saddle, or else fall to the earth only to rise as quick as

lightning and draw a two-edged sword. The knights are proud and brave, the faithful squires give their lives for their masters, the slender demoiselles award the prizes at the tourneys, and love their knights "*minniglich*." Everything is ordered according to the exact prescriptions of the book of the laws of chivalry.

Everything is conventional—first and foremost, the mawkish, languishing style, supposed to be peculiarly adapted to the glorification of this high-born society. Only examples can give any idea of it. Bertha, sitting by a rivulet, sees her reflection in the water. "Bertha blushed so brightly that it seemed as if a star had been kindled in the water." "They sang a morning song so sweet and pleasurable that it seemed as though the setting sun must rise again, drawn by the yearning harmonies." There is a plentiful use of embellishing adjectives: "The youth's heart burned with *charming* (*anmutig*) curiosity." "Two *crystal-clear* drops fell from the eyes of the old knight." Great importance is attached to the description of splendid clothes and armour and ornaments: "He was beautiful to look upon in his armour of the darkest blue steel, magnificently chased and ornamented with gold; beautiful were his dark brown hair, his trim moustache, and the fresh young mouth smiling below it, disclosing two rows of pearly white teeth." A noble lady, pouring forth the tale of her misfortunes, takes time to interlard it with descriptions like the following: "I paced distractedly up and down my room, would hear nothing of the games in which the other noble maidens invited me to take part in the evening, and impatiently waved my maid away when she brought me a beautiful fishing-rod, *inlaid with mother-of-pearl*, with a *golden* line and *silver* hook." It is strange that the inhabitants of a world where all utensils seem to be made of mother-of-pearl, gold, and silver, should think it necessary specially to mention that the gift offered her was composed of these peerless materials.

The emotions are of the same material, all mother-of-pearl and cloth of gold—not one breath of unrestrained natural feeling, not one action dictated by pure, unreflect-

ing passion. All the emotions and passions are as carefully trained as the knights' chargers. We know beforehand how everything will happen. The knights talk to and treat each other with that distinguished courtesy which is peculiar to the privileged classes. One of them inadvertently lets fall a word (about a lady or a joust) which makes it necessary for another to challenge him to mortal combat. Without showing a trace of petty rancour or ill-feeling, the two combatants arm and leap on their snorting chargers; their attendants form a circle round them, holding torches if it is night, and they thrust and hew at each other with all their might. When the one sinks bleeding to the earth, the other throws himself down beside him and binds his wounds with brotherly tenderness and practised surgical skill; then he gives him his arm, and they march off together, their armour clanking bravely.—It is an attempt to resolve the whole rich life of the human soul into a few conventional elements—honour, loyalty, devout and humble love.

In combination with these fine feelings we have the greatest contempt for all except the privileged classes. The hero, Sir Otto, is at a masquerade at the house of his friend, the young merchant, Tebaldo. A troupe of mummers appear and give a performance. In one of the scenes a warrior in armour comes on the stage, bows to Plutus, the god of wealth, and repeats the following lines :—

> "Für Beulen Silber, Gold für Blut
> Herr, gieb Dein Gut, so schlag ich gut."[1]

"Plutus was about to give some ingenious answer, but Otto von Trautwangen rose in wrath, laid his hand on his sword and cried: 'Yonder knave disgraces his armour, and I will prove it on his head, if so be he has the courage to meet me.' Half amused, half alarmed, the company gazed at the wrathful young knight, while Tebaldo angrily dismissed the astounded mummers, upbraiding them with the baseness of their shameful inventions, and forbidding them to enter his house again. Hereupon, blushing with

[1] "Silver for bruises, gold for blood! Pay me well, Plutus, and I'll fight well for you."

shame, he returned to Otto, and in well-chosen, courtly words prayed his guest not to lay it to his charge that the scurvy crew had thought to flatter the rich merchant by thus *outrageously comparing* his calling with that of arms." The same evening Otto meets at his inn a certain Sir Archimbald, and is seized by the fancy to exchange armour with him, "which, methinks, we may readily do, since we are both of the old High-German heroic stature." In exchange for his coat of silver mail Otto receives a black one. An entire change comes over him with the change of armour, which does not surprise us when we remember the important part dress plays throughout. As a matter of fact, these knights are not much more than stuffed suits of armour. They affect one much as do the figures one sees riding upon armoured wooden horses in the Tower of London or the great armoury in Dresden.

From the description of one of Otto's earliest single combats we gain an idea of the extraordinary influence attributed to attire. His opponent, Sir Heerdegen, wears a rusty suit of armour, and his *rusty* voice shouts from behind the bars of his *rusty* helmet: "Bertha! Bertha!" while from Otto's *silver* helmet comes in *silvery* tones the cry: "Gabriele! Gabriele!" When Otto goes back to Tebaldo in his new armour, he has become so much handsomer and more manly, that the young merchant, who happens at the moment to be measuring costly fabrics in his storehouse, is almost ashamed to appear before him. "Then Otto von Trautwangen raised his visor. Tebaldo, half affrighted, fell back, exclaiming: 'O heavens! how you have gained in dignity even since yesterday! And here must I stand before you with an ell-wand in my hand!' Thereupon he flung his beautiful measuring rod against a pillar, shattering it into fragments. It was made of ivory and gold, and his servants could not but believe that this had happened by mischance." They attempt to console their master, but he does not listen to them; all his desire now is to give up his merchant's calling and be allowed to follow Otto as his squire. May not something very like all this be observed to-day in the mutual feelings and demeanour of a Prussian cavalry officer and a Prussian merchant?

This literature is really literature for cavalry officers. The horses are the only creatures in the book whose psychology Fouqué has successfully mastered, and this for the same reason that he was successful with Undine, namely, that it is elementary psychology. In the romances of our Danish author, Ingemann, the milk-white palfrey and the steel-clad black charger also play important parts. When the Lord High Constable is shown us attired in a scarlet cloak edged with ermine and a white-plumed hat, mounted on a tall iron-grey stallion, his swarthy little squire standing beside him holding the bridle of a nimble, restless Norwegian pony, the author has exhausted all his capacity of character drawing. In the description of the tall iron-grey stallion and the nimble little Norwegian pony we have life-like portraits of the Lord High Constable and his squire.

It is exactly the same with Fouqué. Sir Folko's horse is described as a slender-necked, light-footed, silver-grey stallion. "At a signal from his rider he approached Gabriele and bent his forelegs, then leaped into the air and caracoled so lightly back to his place that he seemed to be flying, the golden bells on his harness ringing sweet chimes. Perfectly still and obedient he stood, only turning his beautiful head, under its rich trappings, to look caressingly and inquiringly at his master, as if asking: 'Have I done well?'" —Gallantry, sense of honour, loyalty! What more is there in the knights themselves?

"Sir Archimbald's steed presented a strange contrast. Flecked with white foam, rearing and kicking, he seemed to be about to break the silver chain by which two men-at-arms were holding him back with all their might. His eyes flamed so fiercely that they might well be likened to burning torches, and with his right forefoot he pawed the earth as though he were digging a grave for his master's enemies." —Audacious valour, ardent longing for the fight, indomitable strength! What is there more in the knights?

Sir Otto's father presents him with a horse. "The youth, hastening down, saw a crowd of men-at-arms collected round a bright brown horse with golden trappings. 'Mount,' said his father, 'and make essay if so noble an

animal is content to be your property.' Then the young knight Otto von Trautwangen, controlling the animal with a powerful hand, put him through his paces in such a manner that the soldiers, filled with astonishment, felt assured that the noble steed must recognise his destined master, and that in the knight's power over him there lay some strange significance. Sir Otto sprang from his horse and threw himself into his father's arms. Then the charger snorted and kicked wildly at the retainers who grasped at his bridle, and, breaking away from them, followed his young master and laid his head caressingly upon his shoulder."—Invincibility until the destined master, he whose power over the heart is felt to be "of strange significance," appears, and from that moment onwards absolute devotion and the most tender caresses! What else, what more is there in Fouqué's young maidens of high degree?

It was the fault of the sea-king Arinbjörn that, at the critical moment, Otto lost his beloved and the magic ring. Arinbjörn is riding along a solitary road. A wild bay stallion comes galloping up and makes a furious attack upon the sea-king's horse, and throws him down before his rider can spring from the saddle. Man and horse, lying in a confused heap, are mercilessly kicked by the furious stallion. When we know that the following extraordinary speech of Otto's is made of so sagacious and devoted a horse as this, it does not astonish us so much as it otherwise might: "My horse's colour makes him specially dear to me. For this bright brown is in my eyes a colour of angelic beauty; my blessed mother had great, bright brown eyes, and, as all heaven looked out of them, the colour has always seemed to me like a greeting from heaven."

Thus does the psychology of the romance of chivalry culminate—psychology of the patrician, or psychology of the horse, call it which you will. In its portraiture of knights hailing from all the ends of the earth, *The Magic Ring*, as Gottschall aptly remarks, confines itself to primary types of humanity and the colouring produced by the sun—we are able to distinguish a Moor from a Finn. This book was followed by many others of the

same description, amongst which *Die Fahrten Thiodolf's des Isländers* ("The Expeditions of Thiodolf the Icelander") is the best known. Thiodolf had been forecast by an earlier work of Fouqué's, the great trilogy, *Der Held des Nordens* ("The Hero of the North"), which consists of *Sigurd the Serpent Slayer*, *Sigurd's Revenge*, and *Aslauga*. *Der Held des Nordens* is dedicated to Fichte, and is evidently inspired by the enthusiasm which he had aroused for the olden days of Germany, and for everything characteristically national. The three lyrical-rhetorical "reading-dramas" of which it consists are written in iambics; and where the language becomes particularly impressive or impassioned, short lines are employed, the rhythm and alliteration of which are intended to recall the old Northern metre. The general impression is much the same as that produced by the texts of such of Richard Wagner's operas as deal with the legends of the North.

The verse, though sometimes laboured, generally rings well, the sentiments are noble and chivalrous, the greatness portrayed is superhuman, yet puerile, the light is not the light of day. The hero's bodily strength and endurance are prodigious. He splits an anvil with one blow; he climbs the outer wall of a high tower, and, when he has looked in at the topmost casement and seen all that he wishes to see, jumps lightly down again. Intellectually he is less remarkable.

Of this dramatised version of the Volsung Saga Heine writes: "*Sigurd the Serpent Slayer* is a spirited work, in which the old Scandinavian Saga, with its giants and its witchcraft, is reflected. The hero, Sigurd, is a mighty figure. He is as strong as the Norwegian cliffs, and as wild as the sea that breaks upon them. He has the courage of a hundred lions and the wit of two asses." We may take this last remark as applying to all Fouqué's knightly figures. They are all national portraits, like those we read of in Brentano's story, *Die Mehreren Wehmüller*, those thirty-nine Hungarian types, painted by the artist before he went to Hungary, from amongst which every one afterwards selected his own portrait. In Arnim's and Brentano's

writings everything is specialised and characteristic, the situations as well as the personalities; here everything is generalised. A king is always a hero or a stage-king; a queen is either dark and haughty or gentle and fair, &c., &c. The general type is there once for all; the individual features of the "national portraits" are added later.

The national type, of course, varies with the country. In Denmark, under Frederick VI., the romance of chivalry is patriotic and loyal. In Germany, after the War of Liberation, it is patriotic and aristocratic. In *The Magic Ring* we read: "The Stranger had seen much of the world, but had remained a true, pious German; nay, it was in foreign lands that he had become one; for distance had revealed to him what a glorious country that old Germany was."

In both countries the political tendency of Romanticism is the same.

XVII

ROMANTIC POLITICIANS

In his *Christian Mysticism* (ii. 39) Görres tells us that one of the most noticeable characteristics of a body which, through regeneration, has attained to higher harmony, is the fragrance it exhales. "Just as a foul odour is indicative of diseased and discordant organic life, so inward harmony is revealed by the fragrance which proceeds from it. Therefore the expression, 'the odour of sanctity,' is by no means merely figurative; it is derived from countless well-established instances of sweet odour emanating from persons who lead a holy life." And he quotes numbers of authentic examples of this.

If Görres is right—and I cast no doubt on his assertion—then the personages to whom, in conclusion, I would direct attention for a moment must have exhaled a most fragrant odour, for they are personages with whom both he and the Church were well pleased. All that is now wanting to complete the picture of the Romantic group, is a characterisation of the men who transferred the principles of Romanticism from the domain of literature into that of practical life and politics. Görres himself may be taken as the representative of Romantic ecclesiasticism, and Friedrich Gentz as in all respects the most interesting of the politicians proper.

Joseph Görres was born in the Rhine district in 1776. He sat on the same school-bench with Clemens Brentano. At the time when the French armies overran Germany he was completely carried away by the revolutionary movement. Before he had even begun his university studies, he became a member of the Jacobin Club in his native town, Coblentz, distinguished himself by his championship

of the ideas of liberty, and, in *Das rothe Blatt* ("The Red Journal"), provided the German revolutionary party with an organ. To him the past was detestable, France the promised land, and the rest of the world the domain of slavery.

When, in 1798, the French army marched into Rome, Görres was loud in his rejoicings over the fall of the city and the collapse of the temporal power of the Pope. He writes in *The Red Journal:* "We will tear the mask from ecclesiasticism, and set healthy ideas in circulation everywhere. We too have sworn eternal hatred to priestcraft and monasticism, and work for the good of the people. We at the same time work for the monarchs, by proving their inutility and helping to relieve them from the burden of government."

His style is youthfully audacious and witty, a genuine demagogue and journalist style. But in his scorn we distinguish a certain fanaticism, which, like all fanaticism, is significant of the possibility of a complete revulsion. When the transactions of the Congress of Rastadt had made it easy to forecast the abolition of the three spiritual electorates, of bishoprics, abbacies, &c., Görres advertised in his paper, under the heading of "For Sale," the following wares: "A whole cargo of seed of the tree of liberty, the flowers of which make the best bouquets for princes and princesses. . . . 12,000 human cattle, well broken in, who can shoot, cut and thrust, wheel to the right and wheel to the left. A splendid drilling with cudgel and lash, for twelve years, has brought them to the point of allowing themselves to be shot dead for their masters without so much as a grumble. . . . Three electoral mitres of finely tanned buffalo hide. The croziers belonging to the same are loaded with lead, conceal daggers, and are decorated with artificial serpents. The eye of God on the top is blind."

In December 1799 the French occupied Mayence for the second time. When the news reached Coblentz, Görres wrote his wild song of triumph over the collapse of the Roman-German Empire: "At three o'clock in the afternoon of the 30th December 1799, the day of the crossing of the

Maine, the Holy Roman Empire, of ever foolish memory, passed peacefully away at the advanced age of 955 years, 5 months, and 28 days; the cause of death was apoplexy and complete exhaustion, but the illustrious deceased departed in full consciousness and comforted with all the sacraments of the Church. . . . The deceased was born in Verdun, in June 842 (843). At the moment of his birth a comet (*Perrückenkomet*), pregnant with disaster, was flaming in the zenith. The boy was brought up at the courts of Charles the Simple, Louis the Child, and their successors. . . . But his inclination to a sedentary life, combined with an excess of religious ardour, weakened his already feeble constitution . . . and at the age of about 250, at the time of the Crusades, he became quite imbecile," &c., &c.

Görres here strikes the note which we hear again a generation later in Börne's *Letters from Paris*.

He contemptuously opens and reads the will of the deceased, according to which the French Republic inherits the left bank of the Rhine, His Excellency, General Bonaparte, being appointed executor.

This was Görres' stormy youthful period. By the year 1800 he was beginning to withdraw from active politics, a visit to Paris having cured him of his sympathy with Frenchmen. But he was still an ardent progressionist, dreading nothing so much as a return to the past, which would mean a crushing tyranny (harsher after long abeyance and partly justified by existing circumstances), the rehabilitation of the priesthood, and combined political and religious reaction. The oppression of foreign rule aroused his patriotic feeling. At the university of Heidelberg he entered upon his Romantic period. He lectured on the nature of poetry and philosophy, waxed enthusiastic over the Nibelungenlied, studied ancient German history, poetry, and legend. He met his old schoolfellow, Clemens Brentano, became intimate with Arnim, and came into contact with Tieck and the brothers Schlegel and Grimm. It was at Heidelberg that he published his *Kindermythen* ("Child Myths"), *Die Deutschen Volksbücher* ("The National Literature of Germany"), and his collection of old German Volkslieder and Meisterlieder.

It was not only national feeling which the Romantic movement aroused in Görres ; it induced an almost equally strong feeling of cosmopolitanism, under the influence of which he took up the study of Persian, a hitherto neglected language, and, almost unassisted, attained such proficiency in it that he was able to produce a tasteful prose translation of Firdusi's epic poetry.

In 1818 he went to Berlin as spokesman of a deputation from the town of Coblentz. He boldly urged the king to fulfil the promise of a constitution given at the time of the War of Liberation, and his daring was rewarded with disgrace and several years of exile.

Until 1824 Görres continued to be, to all intents and purposes, the Romantic German patriot. From that year until his death in 1848, he is the champion of the clerical reaction. In his *Deutschland und die Revolution* (1820) the tendency to Catholicism is already distinct ; in it he characterises the Reformation as "a second Fall." He became absorbed in the study of the history of the Middle Ages, and began to regard the Church as the only power capable of satisfactorily defending the liberty of the people from the encroachments of absolutism. Soon, under the influence of Brentano and Franz Baader, he became a believer in visions and bigotedly religious. Clemens Brentano was at this time, like Apollonius of Tyana in days of old, exercising a powerful influence upon a generation predisposed to theosophical extravagances ; and Mme. de Krüdener was founding the Holy Alliance.

As early as 1826, Joseph de Maistre declares that Görres, as author of *Der Kampf der Kirchenfreiheit mit der Staatsgewalt in der Katholischen Schweiz* ("The Struggle of the Church with State Despotism in Catholic Switzerland"), has championed the cause of the Church with both genius and justice, and yet more boldly and effectually than it has ever been done before. Such praise from such lips carries weight ; it indicates, moreover, that we have reached the point at which German Romanticism passes into French, or rather, general European reaction.

In 1827 Görres published a work which is of interest as

forming a prelude to his *Mysticism*, namely, *Emanuel Swedenborg, his Visions and his Relations to the Church.*

In 1833 Clemens Brentano moved to Munich, where Görres had already settled. The old school friends met once more, and Brentano's influence over Görres was great. Brentano was now entirely given over to superstitious fanaticism. Even Schelling's new philosophy of revelation was not pious enough for him. Talking with some young theologians, he shouted: "It is of no use praising it to me! One drop of holy water is more precious to me than the whole of Schelling's philosophy." He had brought all his memoranda of Catharina Emmerich's visions and outpourings to Munich with him; he no longer needed the Gospels; from her he had learned more of Christ's sayings and journeyings than is to be found in the Scriptures. The saint had even revealed a map of Palestine to him. Görres was soon as firm a believer in miracles and myths as Brentano. Between 1836 and 1842 he wrote the four volumes of his *Mysticism*, the most insane book produced by German Romanticism.

The farther Görres penetrated into the mysteries of witchcraft and sorcery, the more fanciful and peculiar did he himself become. He believed that he was possessed by an evil spirit. On one occasion he complained that the devil, provoked by his interference in Satanic affairs, had stolen one of his manuscripts; it was, however, found some time afterwards in his bookcase.

When the religious disturbances broke out in Cologne, Görres came forward as the spokesman of the Ultramontanes in their dispute with the Prussian Ministry. His passionate diatribes against Protestantism were couched in Biblical language — his opponents were a brood of vipers, the Prussian State was possessed by an evil spirit, &c. This particular demon he describes as a horrible ghost, "whom it is honouring too much to call a spirit;" it is, he says, the ghost of the demon which in the Prussian army of our grandfathers' days handled the whip which flogged seven backs at a time.

Görres won the admiration of Count Montalembert, the

leader of the French Catholics, by his polemical feats. In Catholic Germany he was regarded as a father of the Church, and called "the Catholic Luther." He succeeded in drawing the Bavarian Government into the movement; the opponents of the Protestant Prussian Government were allowed to publish their lucubrations unchecked in the Bavarian press, and it was Görres' hope that Bavaria, as an important Catholic power, would openly take up the contest.

No expression of politico-religious fanaticism was too outrageous for him. He went the length of declaring that the Government, by permitting mixed marriages, compelled the Catholic parent to bring up "twofold bastards"—and this in the face of the fact that the King of Bavaria was the son of a Protestant mother and had married a Protestant wife.

At the time of the violent dispute as to the authenticity of the coat of the Saviour preserved at Trèves, Görres was highly delighted with the success of a pilgrimage to Trèves, which was promptly organised, and in which the Rhinelanders, to the number of a million, took part, in order to annoy the Protestant Prussians. To him this pilgrimage was "the triumph of the victorious Church." The argument that the holy garment could not be genuine, seeing that several other places possessed similar coats, he dismissed with a reference to the miraculous multiplication of loaves recorded in the New Testament.[1]

The Romantic literary theory that manner is something absolutely independent of matter, was a theory put into practice in politics by Friedrich von Gentz. We called Kleist the German Mérimée; for several reasons Gentz might be called the German Talleyrand. In his mature years he might, like Metternich, have written under his own portrait: "Nur kein Pathos!" ("Anything except pathos!") He is the very embodiment of Romantic irony, the incarnate spirit of *Lucinde*. He does not, however, become a typical figure until he is over forty, at the time when a period of diplomatic activity succeeded to revolutionary upheavals and the Napoleonic wars, the time when the watchword was reaction, that is to say, quiet—quiet at any price, extinction of all

[1] Sepp, *Görres und seine Zeitgenossen*, Nördlingen, 1897.

the European conflagrations, and rest, profound rest for the sick, the weary, and the convalescent peoples; when consequently, as in a sick room, the great aim was to get rid as quietly as possible of disturbers of the peace and prevent all noise and uproar. "Gentz," says Gottschall, "understood how to give to the official publications that indescribable polish, that classic smoothness, that Olympian dignity which, untouched by the fate of mortals, allows no drop of nectar and ambrosia to be spilled from the cup of the gods, though blood may be flowing in torrents in the regions below. This distinguished manner of passing lightly over the small shocks by which nations were shattered into fragments, gave a complexion of mildness and grace to the despotic policy of the day. One heard only a puff, not a report; it was the noiseless slaughter of the air-gun."

To outward seeming, Legitimist principles were being vindicated; in point of fact, their vindicators were not Legitimists when their interests bade them be the reverse. In them Goethe's words were fulfilled: "None are so Legitimist as those who can legitimise themselves." The cause Gentz championed was a bad cause, but even the champion of a bad cause is interesting if possessed of remarkable talent. And Gentz was talented in an extraordinary degree. Varnhagen rightly said of him: "Never has the dust of German scholarship been stirred up with greater *éclat;* never has learning been displayed to such advantage."

Friedrich von Gentz was born in Breslau in 1764. Both his parents belonged to the middle classes; his future exalted position in society he owed entirely to his own ability. At the University of Königsberg he applied himself seriously to the study of Kant's philosophy, at the same time cultivating an enthusiastic Platonic friendship for an unhappy young married woman, Elisabeth Graun. In 1786 he went to Berlin, obtained a Government appointment, and made a *mariage de convenance* with the daughter of a high official in the finance department. He plunged into a course of unbridled dissipation, and took part in all the foolish pleasures of a court "in which a repulsive assemblage of

roués and bigoted women surrounded the old king, Frederick William II."

In the midst of such a life as this he was surprised by the French Revolution. Its first effect was to fire him with youthful enthusiasm. "If this revolution were to fail," he wrote, "I should deem it one of the greatest misfortunes which has befallen mankind. It is the first practical triumph of philosophy, the first example of a form of government founded upon principles and a coherent system. It is hope and comfort for our race, which is groaning under so many ancient evils. Should this revolution fail, these evils will be more irremediable than before. I can picture so clearly to myself how the silence of despair would acknowledge, in defiance of reason, that men can only be happy as slaves, and how all tyrants, great and small, would take advantage of this dreadful acknowledgment to avenge themselves for the terror caused them by the awakening of the French nation."

But the horrors which the French Revolution brought in its train soon caused him to change his mind. He suddenly became the ardent champion of the good old days. To combat the supremacy of public opinion and the follies of the masses became the object of his life. He was incapable of seeing in the French Revolution the necessary outcome of centuries of wrong and ferment; he declared the cause of its lawlessness to be "enlightenment," the inordinate cultivation of cold reason—a characteristically Romantic theory.

No doubt there was a species of real development at the root of this change. The "rights of humanity," which he had so warmly defended in his treatise *Ueber den Ursprung und die obersten Prinzipien des Rechts* ("On the Origin and Main Principles of Rights"), now seemed to him only of importance to the statesman as "elementary preparatory studies." The theory of these rights appeared to him to stand in much the same relation to statecraft as the mathematical theory of projectiles does to bomb-throwing. And now, by slow degrees, he arrives at the narrow view that it is not the people, but the Government, which is the chief power in

the state. He regards the co-operation of the people in legislation as a mere form; liberty has shrunk into willing, glad obedience.

Intercourse with Wilhelm von Humboldt, and the influence of the æsthetic ideas of the period on the need for harmony between private and public life, somewhat softened the severity of these principles, and the English constitution became Gentz's ideal. When Frederick William III. ascended the throne, he actually felt impelled to present a petition to his Majesty, in which, in eloquent language, he called upon him to concede liberty of the press—the very liberty which he described a few years later as the source of all evil. The loyal Goethe was astounded by this attempt "to coerce" the sovereign, and as the King took no notice of the appeal, Gentz at once let the matter drop, and did his best to bury it in oblivion. From this time onward he was in the pay of England; he did not exactly sell himself, but he accepted regular and considerable monetary rewards for his political activity in English interests. And Gentz needed money. He gambled for high stakes, and lived a life of perpetual dissipation and revelry with actresses and ballet-dancers. At times this was interrupted by fits of extreme sentimentality, when, as he writes, he lived "a pleasant, but still wild life" with his own wife. In April 1801 he notes in his diary: "Profound emotion over the death of a dog." During a visit to Weimar, where he met all the literary notabilities of the day, he became desperately enamoured of the poetess, Amalie von Imhoff, and made determined resolutions to lead a better life. But he had hardly returned to Berlin before he wrote: "Result of my Weimar resolutions —on December 23rd lost all I possessed at hazard." For a time he went on writing letters of six or eight sheets to Amalie von Imhoff; then he fell madly in love with the actress, Christel Eigensatz, and forgot everything else. "*Maintenant c'est le délire complet*," he writes in his diary. In the midst of all this, his wife leaves him and applies for a divorce. The evening she leaves, Gentz tries to forget the unpleasantness in playing *trente et quarante*. When Berlin had for many reasons become disagreeable, nay, im-

possible, he accepted the offer of an Austrian Government appointment in Vienna. Here he gradually surrendered all independence and became the tool of Metternich.

But before this happened, Gentz had had his period of greatness. The apathy with which the Viennese accommodated themselves to French supremacy, to defeats and humiliations without end, roused all that there was of energy and genius in him. The burning hatred of Napoleon by which he was inspired made him for a short time, during their misfortunes and deep depression, the Demosthenes of the German people. But it was only independence that he so passionately desired, not liberty. In Napoleon thewhole Revolution seemed to him to be concentrated. Against him he would not have hesitated to employ even such a means as assassination. He strove with all his might to bring about a union between the German powers and to rouse the German people. But, true to his character, he appealed less to the people than to the chosen few in whose hands it seemed to him that the destiny of the people lay. His preface to the *Political Fragments*, his manifestoes and proclamations of war, are written with passionate vigour, in a fluent, magniloquent, and yet manly style, the rhetorical flourish of which is never in bad taste. Even the defeats of Ulm and Austerlitz did not crush him ; but it was with deep dejection that he observed the miserable condition of affairs in Prussia before the battle of Jena. When Johannes von Müller, and others upon whom he had relied, allowed themselves to be flattered and won over by Napoleon, Gentz remained immovably firm. In the famous letter to Müller he makes scathing allusion to those "whose lives are an incessant capitulation." But when Austria gave up the struggle, and, as generally happens in such cases, frivolity and pleasure-seeking increased in proportion to the defeats and humiliations suffered by the country, Gentz too was soon so deeply entangled in the wild whirl of stupefying dissipations that, in his terrible pecuniary difficulties, he caught at an alliance with Metternich as a drowning man at a plank. The influence on a character like his of the man whom Talleyrand called the "weekly politician," because his range of vision never extended beyond that period, and whom

a distinguished Russian called "varnished dust," was no happy one.

Henceforward Gentz's letters are full of complaints of "such mental lassitude, despondency, emptiness, and indifference" as he had hitherto neither known nor imagined, and which he aptly describes as a "sort of intellectual consumption." He calls himself "damnably blasé." "Believe me," he writes to Rahel, "I am damnably blasé. I have seen and enjoyed so much of the world that I am no longer influenced by its illusive grandeur and rewards." "Nothing delights me; I am cold, blasé, contemptuous, thoroughly persuaded of the folly of almost every one else, unduly certain of my own—not wisdom—but clear-sightedness, and inwardly devilish glad that the so-called great doings are coming to such a laughable end." So indifferent has he become, that Napoleon's downfall, which he had formerly so ardently desired, arouses no deeper feeling in him than this. "I have become terribly old and bad," he himself confesses with an amiable effrontery which reminds us of Friedrich Schlegel, and which never deserted him.

It is about this time that he begins to be persistently haunted by the fear of death; he now regularly notes in his diary the exact degree to which the feeling is weighing upon him. His letters betray all the weaknesses of a nervous woman. The correspondence between him and Adam Müller is particularly ludicrous. We are never allowed to forget that they are both afraid of thunder. But even a letter is sometimes more than Gentz can bear. He writes to Müller: "Your letters shatter my tender nerves." His fear of death most frequently took the form of fear of being murdered. After the assassination of Kotzebue by Sand, his terror lest he also might fall a victim to the hatred of the Liberal youth of Germany reached such a climax that the sight of a sharp knife was sometimes enough, as he himself confesses, to bring on a fainting-fit. In 1814 he writes to Rahel: "Now, God be praised, all is at an end in Paris. I am, thank God, very well. I live sometimes at Baden, sometimes in Vienna, have sometimes brioches with exquisite butter for breakfast, sometimes

other heavenly cakes. I have come into possession of furniture that makes my heart leap for joy, and I am far less afraid of death."

He now looks to Görres as the only person who can write, he himself being incapable of any kind of production. Yet at this very time he occupies such an exalted position in society that he can deny himself to crowned heads. On the 31st of October, 1814, he writes in his diary: "*Refusé le prince royal de Bavière, le roi de Danemark*," &c. He meets Talleyrand, and admires him excessively. To give this admiration a practical direction, the astute French diplomatist presents him with 24,000 florins in the name of the King of France. At the close of 1814 Gentz writes in his diary: "The aspect of public affairs is melancholy. . . . But, since I have nothing to reproach myself with, my accurate knowledge of the pitiful doings of all these petty beings who rule the world, so far from distressing, only serves to amuse me ; I enjoy it all like a play given for my private delectation." Is not this like a speech of Jean Paul's Roquairol? Tired of life, whatever disturbs his peace is objectionable to him. It is now his object to maintain the existing condition of things at any price. In 1815, in argument with Görres, he actually defends the Peace of Paris. He was too sagacious and cold, too great a hater of phrases, not to sneer at the "Burschenschaften" (students' leagues), the agitation for a national German dress, the Teutoburgerwald enthusiasm, and others of the same description ; nevertheless, the assassination of Kotzebue was made a pretext for forbidding the formation of patriotic societies, as further assassinations and crimes were feared. It was owing to Gentz's exertions that the universities were placed under control and that the press was gagged. Of the liberty of the press he now writes: "I hold to my opinion, that, to prevent abuse of the press, nothing should be printed for a certain number of years. This as the rule, with a very few exceptions permitted by a thoroughly competent court, would in a short time lead us back to God and the truth."

His utterances on the occasion of the Greek war of liberation prove that, in spite of his reactionary ardour, he had too much sense to believe, like Adam Müller and the rest, in the principle of legitimacy and the divine right of kings as revealed truths. He had written to Müller in 1818: "You are the only man in Germany of whom I say: He writes divinely when he chooses; and nothing in our audacious days astonishes and exasperates me more than the audacity of those who dare to measure themselves with you. . . . Your system is a completed, rounded whole. It would be vain to attack it from any side. One can only be entirely in it or entirely outside of it. If you can prove to us, make comprehensible to us, that all real knowledge, all true understanding of nature, all good laws and social regulations, nay, even history itself (as you somewhere assert), are, and can only be, communicated to us by divine revelation, then (as far as I am concerned at least) you have gained the day. As long as you do not succeed in doing this, we stand afar off, admire you, love you, but are separated from you by an impassable gulf." It must be remembered that Adam Müller had gone the length of asserting that the existence of the Holy Trinity sufficiently proves that any national economical system based upon one single principle must be a wrong system. It even proves to him the necessity of the "Dreifelderwirthschaft" (triennal rotation of crops). Now, when Greece revolts, Gentz writes that the principle of legitimacy, being the production of time, must be modified by time, and makes the following noteworthy assertion: "I have always been aware that, in spite of the majesty and power of my employers, and in spite of all the single victories gained by us, the spirit of the times would in the long-run prove stronger than we are; that the press, contemptible as it is in its excesses, would prove its superiority to all our wisdom; and that neither diplomatic art nor violence would be able to hold back the wheel of the world."

In his sixty-fifth year, the worn-out, gouty, suffering old man was taken possession of by two passions strangely out of keeping with his age and the bent of his mind.

It was a momentary return of youth. The one was for the famous ballet-dancer, Fanny Elsler, at that time a girl of nineteen. His infatuation for her knew no bounds. He writes: "I have won her simply and solely by the magic power of my love. Until she knew me she did not know that such love existed. . . . Think of the bliss of daily undisturbed intercourse with a being whose every attribute enraptures me . . . in whose eyes, and hands, and every separate charm I can absorb myself for hours, whose voice bewitches me, and with whom I can carry on endless conversations; for I am educating her with fatherly solicitude, and she is the aptest of pupils, a pupil who is at once my beloved and my child."

The other surprising passion was for Heine's *Buch der Lieder*, then just published. It was all very well for the old reactionary to call the audacious poet a "crazy adventurer;" he could not resist his sorcery. "I am still," he writes, "refreshing myself with the *Buch der Lieder*. Like Prokesch, I bathe for hours in these melancholy waters. Even the poems which verge upon actual blasphemy I cannot read without the most profound emotion; I sometimes blame myself that I so often and gladly return to them." His receptive nature could not withstand them. He has rightly described himself as a woman. In a strain which reminds us of the hermaphroditic traits in *Lucinde*, he writes to Rahel: "Do you know the reason why the relation between us is such a perfect one? I will tell you. It is because you are an infinitely productive and I am an infinitely receptive being: you are a great man; I am the first of all the women who have ever lived."

He was now so nervous that a vigorous handclasp would alarm him; even the sight of a martial moustache was enough to disquiet him. In well-intentioned travellers who came to make his acquaintance he saw assassins in disguise. In the last year of his life his back was bent, his gait timorous and unsteady. The clear, sagacious eyes, for which he had been remarkable as a youth, were now, as it were, veiled by their furtive expression. In company he fortified himself by wearing large black spectacles.

One day at a fête, Fanny Elsler, presenting him with a foaming glass of champagne which she had tasted, said teasingly: "Der Krug geht so lange zu Wasser, bis er bricht" (German proverb—The pitcher goes often to the well, but comes home broken at last). Gentz replied: "It will anyhow last out my time and Metternich's." His standpoint is indicated and judged in these words.

In religious matters Gentz was extraordinarily vacillating. At one time he would declare that religion was to him simply a matter of politics; at another, though he never actually went over to Catholicism, he would, in Romantic fashion, make great concessions to it. He prostrated himself at the feet of the Catholic mystic, Adam Müller, who literally took Napoleon to be the devil incarnate (writing, for instance, to Gentz in July 1806, that "as Christians we must subdue the Bonaparte within us"); and, when petitioning the Emperor for an appointment in Austria, he gave as one of his reasons for leaving Prussia, "my long-felt enmity to Protestantism, in the original character and increasingly evil tendencies of which I believe I have discovered, after much and careful proving of the matter, *the root of all the corruption of our times, and one of the main causes of the decay of Europe.*"

In politics he is the representative of unequivocal, conscious reaction, and he does not, like some other hypocritical reactionaries, fight shy of the word. In a letter written at Verona in 1822, he relates that at a dinner-party at Metternich's he has just met Chateaubriand, who has been extremely amiable and complimentary to him. "In the course of conversation he mentioned it as a remarkable phenomenon, one which could not possibly escape the notice of the historian, that four or five years ago, when the condition of Europe seemed quite hopeless, a mere handful of men—not more than could be counted on one's fingers—had determined to combat the Revolution, and that these men had been so successful that to-day they were taking the field, with Governments and armies supporting them, against the common enemy. As marking the most important moments in this *bold reaction*, he mentioned the founding of *Le Conser-*

vateur, and the Congress of Karlsbad. He looks forward to the future with sanguine courage, regarding the victory of the good cause as certain. All true power and real talent are upon our side, contained in some ten or twelve heads. Nothing could be more dangerous for us than to attach too much importance to the attacks of the Revolutionaries, or to be in any way afraid of these said Revolutionaries, who, for all their uproar, are mere babblers. I could scarcely conceive, he added, how such men as Benjamin Constant, Guizot, and Royer-Collard had sunk in the public estimation. This and more he said, not with any fire and eagerness, but calmly and coldly."

Gentz was far from guessing, when he penned these words, how great a surprise this same man held in store for him. Two years later the event occurred which forms the turning-point, the watershed, as it were, in the spiritual history of the first half of the century, namely, Chateaubriand's dismissal from the Ministry and entrance into the ranks of the Liberal opposition, whose leader he became. It was this event in combination with Byron's death, which happened about the same time, that called Liberalism throughout the whole world to arms.

Gentz could not control his wrath. After the appearance of Chateaubriand's article in the *Journal des Débats* on the abolition of the censorship, he wrote to a friend: "I subscribe to every word you say about Chateaubriand. It is long since anything has agitated and incensed me in the manner this really villainous article has done. It is the work of a man who, because he has not succeeded in disturbing the peace of his enemies with drums and pipes, grasps a torch and sets fire to the roof over their heads. Not that there is anything incomprehensible in such a performance, for Frenchmen are now at liberty to do whatever they please; and the man who, in his vindictive antagonism, could immediately violate every sense of duty, honour, and decorum, as this monster did on the third day after his dismissal, was bound in the end, irritated by the feeling of his own impotence, to go as far as he could without running the risk of imprisonment—a risk practically non-existent in his country."

But all Gentz's wrath could not check the current of events, and before long the reaction which he represents was struggling in its death throes.

In a letter to Pilat, written in 1820, he writes: "What is Duller, what is La Mennais, what (with the exception of Bonald) are all the writers of our day in comparison with Maistre? His book *On the Pope* is, to my mind, the greatest and most important of the last half century. You have not read it, or you could not have failed to mention it. Take my advice—do not read it *à bâtons rompus*, amidst the noise and distractions with which you are constantly surrounded, but keep it for a time when you have unbroken quiet and can concentrate your thoughts. Your so-called friends must know the book, but not a word do they say of it. Such meat is too strong for these lukewarm, critical souls. It has cost me some sleepless nights, but what enjoyment have they not purchased me! Profundity of thought in combination with astonishing erudition and with political insight superior to Montesquieu's, the eloquence of a Burke, and an enthusiasm which at times rises to the height of genuine poetry —to this add the characteristics of the man of the world, adroitness, refinement, the knack of sparing the feelings of the individual whilst treading his doctrines and opinions under foot, a prodigious knowledge of men and things—and think of it all employed in such a cause, to produce such results! Yes; now I fully and firmly believe that the Church will never fall. If such a star made its appearance in her sky but once in a century, she would not only stand, but prevail. The book has *some* weak points! I say this in order that my admiration may not seem blind —but they are lost like spots in the sun. Others before Maistre may have felt what the Pope is, but no other writer has expressed it as he has done. This extraordinary book, which the contemptible generation of to-day barely condescends to notice, represents the labour of half a lifetime. The author, now a man of more than seventy, has evidently been engaged upon it for twenty years. A monument should be erected to him in one of the great churches of

Rome. Kings should take counsel with him. As a matter of fact, after he has exhausted his private means, all that he has obtained from his Government, and that not without difficulty, is the title of Minister, and an income sufficient to live upon in Turin with the greatest economy. Never has a human being had a better right to say to his children :—

> 'Disce puer virtutem ex me, verumque laborem,
> Fortunam ex aliis !'

What a man ! and how few of our contemporaries even know that he exists !"

Here, again, we are at a point where the German reaction passes, as it were, into the French.[1]

The German reaction is in its essence literary, the French political and religious. The former gradually glides into Catholicism, the latter is openly and consistently Catholic. In every domain, indeed, the French reaction upholds the principle of traditional authority, and De Maistre is its most earnest and most high-minded, as well as one of its most gifted representatives. The witty and vigorous panegyrist of the headsman and champion of the *auto da fé* is the conscientious, ardent antagonist of enlightenment and humanitarian ideals.

The German Romanticists loved twilight and moonshine. The blazing daylight of rationalism and the lightning flashes of the French Revolution had driven them to seek comfort in the dusk. But what is even Novalis's love of night in comparison with Joseph de Maistre's glorification of darkness !

Ancient legend tells that Phaëton, the son of Apollo, being allowed one day to drive his father's chariot, guided it so carelessly that the sun scorched the whole earth and set many of its cities on fire. The fable adds, that a whole race of men were so terrified that they with one accord cried to the gods to grant them eternal darkness. De Maistre is a descendant of that race, and a man who has some claim

[1] Cf. *Briefwechsel zwischen Friedrich Gentz und Adam Heinrich Müller.* Stuttgart, 1857.—K. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy : *Friedrich von Gentz.* Leipzig, 1867.—*Aus dem Nachlasse Friedrich von Gentz.* Wien, 1867.

to greatness because of his gifts, his faith in Providence, and his contempt for his fellow-men. And to this day there exist descendants of the race; but these have degenerated into dwarfish figures, who assert themselves the more the more insignificant and timid they are. Their cry, too, is "Darkness! more darkness!" The more devoid they are of ideas and aims, the louder they cry, and their only faith is faith in the power of darkness.

Those who, in studying the history of German Romanticism, pay special attention to the growth of the reaction against the spirit of the eighteenth century, are struck by the inferiority of the German Romanticists in single-minded strength of character to such a reactionary as De Maistre. It is to be remembered, however, that they were not statesmen and politicians, but authors; even those among them who, like Gentz, represent the transition from literature to politics, have no real significance except as writers.

From the purely literary point of view the Romantic School in Germany possesses permanent interest. One has but to compare it with the equivalent groups in other lands to be fully impressed by the originality and intellectual importance of its members.

A Romantic current is perceptible in the first decades of this century in almost every country in Europe; but only in Germany, England, and France is the movement a distinctly original and important one; only in those countries is it a European "main current." What we observe in the Slavonic countries is more or less an echo of English Romanticism.

The Romantic literature of Scandinavia is strongly influenced by that of Germany.

In Sweden, where Romanticism was known by the name of "Phosphorism," or "new school," it attacked (as was its wont) French taste in literature, in this instance represented by the Swedish Academy. In 1807 the "Aurora Society" was founded by Atterbom, Hammarsköld, and Palmblad. The principles it proclaimed were in all essentials those of the German Romantic School. Atterbom's symbolism reminds us of Tieck's; Stagnelius has a certain

resemblance to Novalis. The movement has, nevertheless, distinctly national characteristics.

In Norway the lonely Wergeland, in spite of his highly susceptible, enthusiastic temperament, is a living protest against the German Romantic spirit; but Andreas Munch is a pronounced Romanticist of the German type. And such undertakings as the re-writing and publication of the Norwegian fairy tales (Asbjörnson and Moe) and the collecting of the Norwegian national songs (Landstad) are due to the impulse which the Romanticists' predilection for everything national communicated to the minds of the men of the North.

In Denmark the connection between German and native Romanticism is of a very complex nature. As a rule, the Danish poets receive their first impulse from Germany, but afterwards strike out paths for themselves. Oehlenschläger was awakened by Steffens and strongly influenced in the early years of the century by Tieck. It was under the influence of German Romanticism that Grundtvig renounced his youthful rationalism; and his patriotism and nationalism have strong points of correspondence with Arndt's and Jahn's. The influence of Fouqué and Hoffmann is apparent in Ingemann; Hauch is an enthusiastic admirer of Novalis; J. L. Heiberg, as the dramatiser of fairy tales, is a pupil of Tieck; Hans Christian Andersen, as the fantastic story-teller, the pupil of Hoffmann. Shack Staffeldt, German born, is a full-blown Romanticist, a devout worshipper of "the blue flower."

But though foreign influence, as this work sufficiently shows, is everywhere traceable, the independent, national and Scandinavian characteristics of Danish Romanticism are, nevertheless, unmistakable and strong.

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